

A FAIRY TALE OF THE OLDEN TIME.

BY E. M. R.

IN the days of chivalry, when life to the wealthy was a series of exciting enjoyments, and to the poor a hopeless slavery, a Fairy and a beautiful child lived in an old castle together. The owner of this large and neglected building had been absent on the crusade ever since the time which gave him a daughter and deprived him of a wife; but many an aged pilgrim brought occasional tidings of the glory he was winning in the distant land. At last it was said that he was wending his way homeward, and bringing with him a young orphan companion, who had risen, by dint of his own brave deeds alone, from the rank of a simple knight to be the chosen leader of thousands. The child had grown to girlhood now, and very bright upon her sleep were the dreams of this youthful hero, who was to love her and be the all of her solitary life. I said she had dwelt with the Fairy:

true, but of her presence she had never dreamed. Always invisible, the being had yet never left her. She whispered prayer in her ear as she knelt, morning and evening, in the dim little oratory ; she brought calm and happy feelings to her breast, which the commonest things awoke to joy and life ; she led her to seek and feel for the needy, the sick, and the suffering ; she nurtured in her the holiest faith in God and trust in man : yet the maiden thought she breathed all this from the summer evenings, the flowers, the swift labors of her light fingers, and the thousand things which cherished the happiness growing up within her heart. It was night, and Ada slept ; the moon's rays, gilding each turret and tower, crept in at the narrow portal which gave light to the chamber, and lingered on the sunny hair and rounded limbs of the sleeping girl. The Fairy sat by her side, weeping for the first time.

“ Alas ! ” said she, “ the stranger is coming ; thou wilt love him, my child ! and they say that earthly love is misery. Among us, we know no unrest from it ; we love, indeed, each other and all things lovely ; but ages pass on, and love changes us not. Yet they say it fevers the blood of mortals, pales the cheek, makes the heart beat, and the voice falter, when it comes ; yet it is eternal, mighty, and entrancing.

Alas! I cannot understand it! Ada, I must leave thee to other guidance than my own; I love thee more than self, still I can be no longer thy guide!"

The Fairy started; for she felt, though she heard not, that other spirits had suddenly become present. She raised her eyes, and three forms, more radiant than any fairy can be, were gazing on her in silent sadness.

"O spirits!" cried the weeper, faintly, "who can ye be?"

"The Shades of Love," replied voices so ethereally fine that a spirit's ear could hardly discern the words.

"The Shades!" repeated the Fairy, in surprise. "I thought Love was one."

"I am Love," said the three together; "intrust the untainted heart of your beloved one to me!"

"O pure beings!" cried the Fairy, bending reverently before them, "will ye indeed guide Ada to happiness, yet ask my permission? Tell me only how ye each will guide her; and grant me, though not human, to choose which a human heart would prefer."

"My name is Mind," replied the first. "When I dwell on earth, I bind together two ethereal essences; I unite the most spiritual part of each; I assimilate thought; I cause the communion of ideas. No love can be eternal without me, and with me associate

the loftiest enjoyments. Words cannot tell the rapture of love between mind and mind. Dreams cannot picture the glory of that union. Very rarely do I dwell unstained and alone in a human breast; but when I do, that being becomes lost in the entireness of its own bliss. Fairy, the lover of Ada is a hero; wilt thou accept me to reign in her heart?"

The Fairy paused, and then spoke sadly, —

"Alas, bright being! Ada is a girl of passionate and earnest feeling! Thou couldst not be happiness to her. Thou mightest, indeed, abstract her intellect in time from all things but itself; but the heart within her must first wither or die, and the death of a young heart is a terrible thing! Pardon me, but Ada cannot be thine."

"They call me Virtue," said the second spirit. "When I fill a heart, that heart can live alone. It wakes to life on seeing my shadow in the object it first loves; that object never realizes the form of which it bears the semblance, and then it turns to me, the ideal, for its sole happiness. I am associated with every thing pure, and holy, and true. Where human spirits have drawn nighest to the Eternal, I have been there to hallow them! Where the weak have suffered long without complaint; where the dying have to the last, last breath held one name

dearer than all; where innocence hath stayed guilt, and darkest injuries been forgiven,—there ever am I! Fairy, shall I dwell with Ada?"

Still sadder were the accents of the guardian Fairy.

"And is this human love?" said she. "This would be no happiness to my child, who is a mortal and a woman, and who will yearn for a closer and a dearer thing than the love of goodness alone! Erring creatures cannot love perfection as their daily food. Beautiful spirit! thou art fitted for heaven, not earth—for an angel, but not for Ada!"

Then spoke the third.

"My name is Beauty," said she. "Men unite me to imagination and worship me. Many have degraded me to the meanest things I own, because my very essence is passion; but they who know my true nature unite me with every thing divine and lovely in the world. If I fill Ada's heart when she loves, the very face of all things will change to her. The flowing of a brook will be music, the singing of the summer birds ecstasy; the early morning, the dewy evening, will fill her with strange tenderness, for a light will be on all things—the light of her love; and she will learn what it is to stay her very heart's beatings to catch the lightest step of the adored—to feel the hot blood rushing to her brow when only

he looks on her!—the hand tremble, and the whole frame thrill with exquisite rapture, and meet with delicious tremor the first look of love from a man! The rapture of my first bliss were worth ages of misery; and, pressed to the bosom of the beloved, a human spirit feels it is blessed indeed. Youth is mine, eternal youth and pleasure. Fairy, Ada must be mine!”

“Thou seemest,” said the Fairy, musingly, “to be the most suited for mortals. In thy words and emblems I see nothing but sensuality of the least material order. And to all there seemeth, too, to be a time when one clasp of the hand that is loved is more than the comprehension of the grandest thought. Beauty, I will give up my child to thee! and O, if thou canst not keep her happy, keep her pure till I return! Guard her as thou wouldst the bloom of the rose leaf, which may not bear even a breath!”

The Fairy's voice faltered as she turned away and imprinted a kiss on the sleeper's cheek. Ada moved uneasily, but did not awake; and in the last glance that she gave to her charge was united the form of the spirit of Beauty, folding, in motionless silence, her radiant wings over the low couch. The other Shades had fled some brief time since, and, burying her face in her slight mantle, the beautiful Fairy faded slowly away in the moonlight.

A brief time passed, and the baron had returned with his hero guest to the castle, and the beneficent being who had guarded Ada's childhood had been up and down upon the earth, cheering the sad, soothing the weary, and inspiring the fallen. Much had she seen of human suffering, yet many a great lesson had it taught her of the high destiny of mortals, and she winged her flight back to Ada's couch sanguine of her happiness. The spirit of Beauty still floated above it, but the Fairy thought that the bright form had strangely lost its first ethereality. Fevered and restless, the sleeper tossed from side to side. With trembling fear she drew near the low bed, and gazed fondly on the unconscious form. Alas! there was no peace on that face now! There was that which some deem lovelier than even beauty—passion; but to the pure Fairy the expression was terrible.

“My child! my child!” cried she in agony; “is this thy love? Better had thine heart been crushed within thee, than that thou shouldst have given thyself up to it alone! Thou hast an eternal soul, and thou hast loved without it! Thou art feeding flames which will consume the feelings they have kindled! Spirit, is this thy work?”

“Such is the love of mortals,” answered the Shade.
“It is ever thus; the sensual objects are but emblems

of the spirit union of another world ; yet this is never seen at first, and every impetuous soul, rushing on the threshold of life, worships the symbol for the reality—the image for the god. Fear not, Fairy ; the flame dies, but the essence is not quenched : from the ashes of Passion springs the Phoenix of Love. Ada will recover this burning dream.”

“Never!” cried the Fairy, “if she yields her heart up to thoughts like these. Thou art a fiend, Beauty—a betrayer! Avaunt, thou most accursed! thou hast ruined my child!”

And as she spoke, weeping bitterly, she averted her face from the Shade. All was once more still, and, her grief slowly calming, the Fairy hoped she was now alone, until, raising her eyes, she saw the being, more radiant and glorious than ever, still guarding the sleeping girl.

“Fairy,” said the Shade, sadly, “this is no fault of mine. I have ever come to the human heart with thoughts pure as the bosom of the lily and beautiful as paradise, but the nature of man degrades and enslaves me. Thou sawest how my wings were soiled and their light dimmed by the sin of even yon guileless girl, and, alas! thousands have lived to curse me and call me demon before thee. Now, at thy bidding, I will leave Ada, and forever. She will awake, but

never again to that fine sympathy with nature, that exquisite perception of all high and holy things, I have first made her know. She will awake still good, still true; but the visions of youth quenched suddenly, as these will have been, leave a fearful darkness for the future life."

"Alas! alas!" cried the Fairy, wringing her hands, with a burst of sudden grief, "whether thou goest or remainest now, Ada must be wretched."

"Not so," returned the Shade, in a voice whose sweetness, from its melancholy, was like the wailing of plaintive music—"not so, if thou wilt otherwise. Thou hast erred: from the Shades of Love thou didst select me; and, panting as we each do for sole possession of the heart we occupy, it is impossible either separately can bring happiness to it. Each has striven for ages, but in vain. It is the union of the three, the perfect union, that alone makes Love complete."

"But will Mind and Virtue return?" asked the Fairy, doubtingly. "I bid them myself depart."

"They will ever return," said Beauty, joyfully, "even to the heart most under my sway, if desired in truth. A wish, sometimes,—fervent and truthful it must be, but still a wish,—alone often brings them."

At that moment, a hurried prayer sprang to the

Fairy's lips ; but ere it could frame itself into words, light filled the little chamber, and the three Shades of Love stood there once more, beautiful and shining.

“Mighty beings,” said the Spirit, “forgive me ! Attend Ada united and forever, and I shall then have fulfilled my destiny.”

“We promise,” returned the Shades.

And gazing for a few moments in earnest fondness on the dreamer's happy face, the Fairy bade a last farewell to her well-loved charge.

BACHELOR BIM,
OR THE MAGIC OF A LAUGH.

BY HATTIE.

You know her, do you? the bright-eyed, kind-hearted, happy Fannie;—she, the light and joy of a wide circle of friends, who luxuriate in her loving smiles as in the sunshine of spring, who laugh because she laughs, and carol their sweet songs because she leads the way with her chirruping voice. O, you know her; I know you do. I can see it in the dimpling smile that sleeps within your cheek when I mention her name; the bewitching glance of your eye when I tell you of her.

She is always happy. She sees nothing in nature but gladness; nothing in its God but goodness; and blending these together in one sweet, harmonious whole, she worships with all the devotion of an innocent love.

Fannie was born in the spring, and whether or not the fact is to be attributed to such a birth time or not, it nevertheless is a fact that she delights in the spring time and beauties. As it advances, and its "ethereal mildness" wafts the sweet fragrance of wood and forest to her cottage home, she instinctively lies away to the home of the birds and flowers. She calls around her half a score of loved companions, and hand in hand romps with them in Nature's festival hall, tapestried with green leaves, bright blossoms, and budding vines.

They wander by brook and brae, and bind wreaths for their friends at home, whose avocation or ill health prevents them from being participants in their out-door sports.

Adventurous was the spirit of Fannie. She delighted to clamber over the rude rocks, and cast the bright glances of her eyes into nooks and crevices never before illumined by so fair a light. Nor was her limit the forest and field, as the sequel will show.

There was an old, large, dilapidated building, situated about a quarter of a mile from Fannie's dwelling. The reputed owner was a bachelor, one of those creatures who are so fond of themselves that they desire no other companion—no warm heart to beat in unison with their own, no hand to press the aching

brow, no gentle voice to soothe, comfort, cheer the hours of lingering sickness:—

“Ocean and land the globe divide;
Summer and winter share the year;
Darkness and light walk side by side;
And earth and heaven are always near.”

But these poor, mistaken fellows, who dream of bliss without aught to create it, would live alone, unsupported, unaided, *alone*. O, cheerless word to a heart made to love and be loved.

The grim old mansion stood alone also. It partook of the general appearance of loneliness that surrounded it; even the stones seemed desirous of parting; and a few really had done so, and remained where they had fallen—types of bachelors' hearts.

The house was one of those large, uncouth structures, not uncommon, known as somebody's “folly,” and was large enough to justify truth in a newspaper advertisement of “a two-story house, containing an acre of land and other conveniences.” Bachelor Bim lived in one undivided corner of this edifice, and it was he that Fannie and her friends proposed to visit, *en masse*. So, one summer morning, just as breakfast had been dished, they dressed themselves in gay attire, and laughing with an earnestness indicative

of the peculiar feature of their merry mission, passed in the direction of the field of battle.

As they neared it, unmistakable signs of their close approach were to be seen. Here was a wagon with but one wheel; there a chaise, old and musty, with but one seat.

Fannie, quick in thought, saw all, and accounted for the singleness of spirit which had diffused itself into all animate and inanimate things, by indiscriminately calling them "chips of the old block."

The building was in view; and, inclined to jocund laughter as the fair invaders were, a feeling, not really of sadness, but inclined that way, came upon their minds. How lonely, when all might be so cheerful! And as they carefully opened the gate which, by the way, was dangling upon one hinge, they thought how different all would be with woman's gentle hand to arrange, woman's sweet smile to cheer.

Then followed a loud, clear laugh, that made the old porch echo with its sound.

Fannie was the first to enter. Silently, with finger on her mouth as a token of the momentary silence she wished her companions to observe, unconscious of the near presence of the owner of the house, who, having heard the visitants, had concealed himself behind an old carpet that hung near the door, and

looking out from an opening in its folds, was intently watching their movements.

They continued to advance, and one by one ascended the dusty stairs.

Bachelor Bin, seeing the boldness of the intruders upon his single blessedness, began to twitch about and make himself uneasy.

Altogether unused to such visitors, he hated their presence. Hermit-like, he had withdrawn himself from his fellows, and saw none, neither man nor woman, except as they occasionally passed his house and then not very distinctly, for they invariably glided by with all speed, a rumor being in circulation that Bin and the evil one lived together, and laid traps for strangers.

As he saw the last of the frolicsome ascend, Mr. Bin passed up by a rear stairway, and, determined to appear as well as circumstances would allow, seated himself on a broken chair in what he called "the best room."

Shook! How he shook and shivered as the laugh was heard resounding within those sombre walls! And the madcaps, as he calls them, approach. Closer to his chair he clings, firmer he sits. Lo! one leg breaks beneath his weight, and he balances himself on two. Just at this moment the door opens, and in rush the

visitors, in all the beauty and liveliness of girlhood.

Fannie, with her light hood carelessly tossed upon her head; Imogen, with her bright, black curls dancing around her clear, white shoulders; Minnie, with a wreath of green encircling her brow; Anna, tall and graceful as a fawn; Jeannette, with full, flooding eye of blue; and six others, equally as fair, enticing, bewitching, and beautiful, in an instant stood laughing with hearty zest around Bachelor Bim.

What should he do?

What could he do but participate with them in the sunlight of the moment? And so he did. At first his heart inclined to anger: unaccustomed to the social habits of life, he would at first withdraw. But *how* to withdraw? Ah, that was the question! There was where Greek met Greek. There was where came the tug of war. He could not withdraw. They encircled him. They all laughed loud and heartily, in compliance with the request of Fannie, who led the expedition for the purpose of testing the efficaciousness of laughter and hilarity as an antidote for stoicism and moroseness.

Beneath the effect of the laughter, Bim's heart melted; he jumped up, danced about, mad with joy, and though he resisted at first, he yielded at last.

He conducted his gay company around his house, and though ashamed of what was to be seen, he excused all by promising improvement, and living more like a human being in future.

“And now,” said Fannie, as they were about to leave, “we must have your promise; you must promise to marry.” ’Twas hard to promise such an event, so allied to an impossibility. Yet he did.

Fannie and her companions each kissed the old fellow, after which operation he reiterated, with decided emphasis, his determination to marry; and they left him fully satisfied with the effects produced by the “magic of a laugh.”

BRIDGET PATHLOW.

To work out an honest purpose, in spite of opposition, misfortune, penury, taking no heed of scorn, no heed of ridicule ; to say that you who now despise shall yet respect, you who scorn shall yet have benefit ; to say these things and do them, is to present human nature in a form which sooner or later must obtain universal sympathy. In this virtue a world of hope lies hidden, even for the meanest ; for, in being honest to ourselves, we create a power of honestly serving others.

In the town of Lincoln there lived, some years ago, a man of the name of Pathlow, who, having served in the army, had retired, at the close of the war, upon a small pension. He belonged to what is commonly called a good family, was proud of this relationship, and having dissipated his little patrimony, and made an ill-assorted marriage, had entered the army, not with the desire to serve, but as the only means he had of finding to-day or to-morrow's bread. After

many struggles between poverty and pride, debt and disgrace, he settled in Lincoln, when he was some years past middle life. Here the old course was run. Fine houses were taken, fine appearances made; but these, unlike the three degrees of comparison, did rather begin with the largest and end with the smallest; so that, when our tale commences, the fine house in the finest street had dwindled into a mean habitation, that could only boast its neighborhood to the minster, where, shadowed by some antique trees, and within sound of the minster's bell, it was the birthplace of Bridget Pathlow.

There were two brothers several years older than Bridget, born before Pathlow had settled in Lincoln, and on whose education he had spent all available means; for, as he had great promises from great relations, he destined them to be gentlemen. Besides these two, Bridget had another brother, some years younger than herself, who, being born, like her, during the poverty and ill fortunes of the parents, was looked upon with no favorable or loving eye.

Whilst the elder brothers were better clad, well taught, inditing pleasant epistles to far-off relations, poor Tom and Bridget Pathlow were the household drudges. To do dirty work; to repel needy creditors; to deny with the prompted lie; to steal along the

streets, and, with the heart's blood in her face, to hear the unpaid tradesman dishonor her father's name; to sit by the fireless hearth, or by the window to watch her father's return, who, urged for money, would perhaps keep from home whole nights, having first told Bridget that he should not return alive; to watch through those hours of mental pain, and yet in this very loneliness, in these childish years, to have one never-failing belief of being by self-help not always so very sorrowful or so despised,—surely made this young child no unworthy dweller under the shadow of the olden minster. Tom was not half so resolute as Bridget, nor so capable of endurance.

The elder brothers left home when Bridget and Tom were not more than eleven and eight years old. No love had been fostered between these elder and younger children; yet in the heart of Bridget much was garnered. Now that they were alone, the children were more together, the household drudgery was shared between them, as well as the cares and sorrows of their miserable home, and the stolen play round the minster aisles, where many, who despised the parents, said kind words to the children. Designing her for some humble employment, where the weekly gain of two or three shillings would supply the momentary want, Captain Pathlow (as he was

called) denied Bridget any better education than such as was afforded by a school, the weekly fees of which were sixpence; but she had a kind friend in an old glass stainer, who lived hard by, and another in his son, a blind youth, who was allowed to play upon the minster organ. As a return to this poor youth for some few lessons in organ playing, Bridget would carry home each evening the key of a little postern door, (which a kind prebend had lent him,) and by which private access was gained to the cloisters. So often did Bridget carry back that key, that at last, becoming a sort of privileged person, she was allowed to come through the garden, which, shadowed by the cloister walls, lay pleasant before the prebend's quaint study window. The old man, looking up often from his book, and remembering that in Lincoln her father's name was linked to all meanness and disgrace, would wonder to see her push back from the overhanging boughs the ripe apples, or the luscious grapes, untouched, untasted; so, judging from small things, he took to heart that this poor Bridget had a touch of nobleness about her. From this time he observed her more narrowly. Hurrying across the garden, she yet always lingered (particularly if the shadows of evening were low) to look at one piece of wood carving, which, projecting from the old cloister wall, looked

in the waning light like the drooping ivy it mimicked. One night the old man questioned her, and said he should like to be her friend, to have her taught, to serve her.

"I thank you much, sir," said she; "but if——" She stopped abruptly.

"If what, Bridget?"

"If I could sew or earn——" She stopped again.

"Well," said the old man, smiling, "I see you are a good girl, Bridget. There are, if I remember what my housekeeper said, six Holland shirts to make, which——"

"I will do them. To-morrow night I will come; for I have a purpose to serve, which will make me work with a ready finger."

She was gone before the old man could answer. The morrow and the morrow's night saw that poor child plying the quick needle, whilst brother Tom guarded the chamber door, lest a gleam of the candle should betray the solitary and hidden task.

Unknown to Bridget, the worthy prebend made to Captain Pathlow an offer of serving his child. But this offer was repulsed with bitter scorn. "He had rich relations," he said, "who could serve Bridget, without her being a pauper. For the rest, no one had a right to interfere."

Bridget was henceforth forbidden even to quit the house. But the six fine Holland shirts were at length completed and carried home; Tom returning the happy bearer of a bright, shining piece of gold. This was soon laid out. In what? Bridget knew best, for she still worked on by night.

Returning home late one evening, the father observed the gleaming light from the lone garret window, and creeping upon the two children unseen, not only paralyzed them with fear, but holding in the candle's flame the diligent work of many weeks, the fruition of that child's earliest desire, that fruit of an honest purpose, — no dainty piece of needlework was it, but the drawn image, leaf by leaf, of the curious carving, — burnt it to ashes.

"If you can work," he said fiercely, "there are milliners in Lincoln who want errand girls. Ha! ha! two shillings a week will add ale to our night's meal!"

The girl was only saved from this destiny by the arrival one Saturday, during dinner time, of a very large letter sealed with black, which, being opened, was found to have come from the elder brother, who, stating the death of an uncle, advised that Bridget should be sent immediately upon a speculative visit to the widowed aunt. This was food of a right kind

to Pathlow ; he began its digestion immediately. " You must say good words for us, Bridget—good words. Hint that a suit of clothes, or a five pound note, will be acceptable to me, and a new silk gown to your mother ; and, in short, any thing."

The girl's few miserable clothes were soon packed within one narrow box, a letter written to the guard of the coach, which was to convey her from London into the western provinces, to say, that her relation would pay at the end of the journey. Dear Tom parted with a copy, on paper, of that rare carving, laid secretly on the prebend's reading desk, and on the morrow after the letter came, Bridget saw the last glimpse of Lincoln minster. Her eldest brother—he who had written the letter—lived in London, a gay, apparently rich, gentleman, studying, it was said, for a physician, if study he ever did ; but as Bridget had been forewarned not to make her appearance at his lodgings during the day, she was forced to stop till night came within the garret chamber assigned to her at the inn where the coach had staid. With that apology for a trunk,—small as it was, it would have held the wardrobes of three Bridgets,—mounted on the burly shoulders of an herculean porter, the girl found her brother's home. She had expected to see rich apartments, but none so rich as these, where,

surrounded by all the semblance of aristocratic life, her brother lay stretched upon a sofa sipping his wine, and reading the evening paper.

"Well," was his greeting, "you're come;" and then he went on with his paper.

These words fell chill upon the girl's heart; but she knew she was his sister, and she knelt to kiss him. "Dear Richard, dear brother, I have so counted on this hour. They all send their love—Tom, and Saul, and ——"

"There, that'll do. Go and sit down. These things are low; you must forget them all. But, faugh! how you're dressed! Did any one see you as you came in?"

The answer was satisfactory: so the reading went on.

"You must forget these Lincoln people altogether," he said, after a while; "you are going to be a lady, and the memory of poverty sits ill upon such. Mind, I warn you to have a still tongue. For the rest, make yourself comfortable; say black is black, and white white. A very good maxim, I assure you, for a dependant."

"Can happiness come from such belief, or future good?" asked Bridget. "Can ——"

"There, that'll do; I never discuss points with children. Talk the matter over with the next maid

servant, or reserve it for private meditation when you are upon the top of the coach."

Bridget had little to say after this, and a late hour of that same night found her journeying to the western province, where her widowed relation dwelt. At length, on the second morning after leaving London, she found herself in a country town, in a gay street, standing upon a scrupulously clean step, knocking upon a very bright knocker, not only for her own admittance, but for that of the scantily-freighted box. A demure-looking servant appeared, who, taking in to her mistress the introductory letter which the elder Pathlow had indited, being, as he had said, the fishing hook whereby to catch the fish, left the Lincoln girl to a full hour's doubt as to whether she should have to retrace her way to Lincoln, or be received as the poor dependant. It seemed that her unexpected arrival had created much discussion; for loud voices were heard in a neighboring parlor. The dispute, rising into a storm, was only stayed by Bridget's being ordered into the presence of the bereaved widow, who, being of substantial form, sat in a capacious chair, with a plentiful flow of lawn before her weeping face. She was surrounded by several relatives, each of whom had children to recommend; but wishing to exhibit her power, and triumph over their

greedy expectations, she rose, and throwing herself upon the astonished girl's neck, made visible election of a dependant. Foiled in their purpose, the relations disappeared. The widow, like a child pleased with a toy, made for a while much of the poor Lincoln girl: old dresses were remodelled, old bonnets cunningly trimmed, by-gone fashions descanted on, till, to crown the whole, the girl wished back her Lincoln rags, rather than walk the streets to be gazed at by every passer by. In this matter there was no appeal; there never is against dogged self-opinion or selfish cunning. Pleased with having one on whom to wreak a world of spite, the widow soon changed her first show of kindness to taunts, reproaches proportionate to the loneliness and dependence of the child. Months went by without one solitary gleam of happiness, for books or learning were forbidden; added to all this, too, were perpetual secret letters from her home, urging her to send money. But there was no meanness in Bridget; she could endure, but not crave unworthily. Things had gone on thus for a twelvemonth, when, one winter's day, the widow came back, after a week's absence, a gay bride; and that same night Bridget was sent back on her way to Lincoln, with five shillings in her pocket over and above the coach hire.

Bridget had a fellow-passenger, who, having travelled

far, and being young, and troubled with a child, was much pleased with the thousand little kindnesses that the girl performed; so that, before the journey to London was ended, a vast friendship was established between them. They parted with much regret; for, to one like Bridget, so lonely, so destitute of friends, the mere semblance of kindness was a treasure in itself. She had sat some time in the office waiting for the Lincoln coach,—not without comfort, for the bookkeeper had stirred up the office fire, and, suspecting her scanty purse, had supplied her with a glass of warm ale and a toast,—when a pale but respectable-looking man entered, and saying that he was the husband of Bridget's fellow-passenger, had come to offer her the comfort of his home for a day or so, as a return for her kindness to his wife and child. After some little deliberation, Bridget accepted the offer, for she dreaded to return home without having written to say that she was coming; so an hour afterwards, Bridget sat with a baby on her knee, by the side of her fellow-passenger, in a comfortable second-floor room, in a street leading from Long Acre. Never was such a tea prepared as on this memorable night, never such a hearth, never such a baby, never such a happy young wife, never such a wondering Bridget; for here seemed the visible presence of all

riches her heart had ever craved; here in this working chamber of a Long Acre herald painter. Here, too, without wealth, was the power of mind made visible; here, in this chamber of the artisan. A few cheap books nicely arranged, a few prints, rich panelled escutcheons, and cunning tracery, that brought to mind old things in Lincoln minster, covered the walls. These things stood out like the broad written words of hope and perseverance.

Bridget had never been so happy. On the morrow, a letter was despatched; but the answer was one of bitter reproach; harsh threats. It bore no invitation to return; and when it said that Tom had left Lincoln, Bridget had no desire to do so. The stay of a few days was lengthened into one of months; for when her good friends knew her history,—all of it, saving her love of art,—they could but pity, which pity, ripening into estimation as her character became more known, turned friendship into love. We draw no romantic character, but one of real truth. Bridget was the busiest and cheerfulest; up early, so that the hearth was clean, the breakfast ready, the baby neatly dressed; and this not done for once, but always; so that Bridget became a necessary part of the household in Long Acre. By and by, when she was found to possess an aptitude for drawing, the artisan

set busily to work, and by the evening fire paid back, in teaching, her honest service. An upturned cup, a book, a jug, were drawn; and when these were perfect, things of greater difficulty were sketched. Her progress was but slow, yet so perfect, that in a few months' time she was a real help to her master; and when he fell into bad health, and had to work at home, she assisted to bring bread to that poor household. The artisan grew no better, but lingering week by week in a consumption, was each day less able to perform the work which, being of a rare and delicate kind, his master would intrust to no other hand.

One week (the week before he died) a crest of rare device had to be painted on the panels of a rich city merchant's carriage. No hand could execute it like that of the dying man; but his hand was past work, though the mind could still invent; and Bridget, who knew that, but for this work being done, no bread could come, knelt, and by his bed earned what was last eaten by that dying man. The work excelled the master's hope; he wondered more when, with that artisan's last breath, he learned the act of mercy, how done and by whom. Bridget reaped good fruit: when she had lost one friend, when his widow and child had left London for the country, the good old master coachmaker took Bridget home into veritable Long

Aere itself. He was not rich ; but paying Bridget for all her services, she had money wherewith to take new lessons in art, — to begin the learning of wood engraving, in which she afterwards rarely excelled, — to lay by four bright gold pounds, as the means of seeing Lincoln once again. They had never written to her from home, never for years ; but still her heart clung to those old memories which had encompassed her childhood.

She was now seventeen. It was a bright May morning when she travelled onward to the minster town. How her heart beat audibly, when, by the waning evening light, the home even of that miserable childhood was seen again ! Lifting the latch, she stole into the house ; but no happy voice, no greeting met her ear : all that was said was, “ Well, you’re come at last.” But by and by, when it was hinted that the larder was empty, and the relie of those four bright pounds were seen, more civil words were heard, which, warming into a full tide of kindness, lasted, veritably lasted, till the last shilling was spent ; then — then laughing her poverty to scorn, she was ordered to travel back to London in the best fashion she could.

The good old prebend was absent from Lincoln ; so it was only from poor blind Saul she could borrow a scanty sum, which sum was the more needful, as she

had to travel out of the high road to a little town where her dear brother Tom now lived. He had run away from home soon after Bridget had left, and, after many ups and downs in those few years, was now become half clerk, half servant, in the house of a country attorney. His nature was more passive than that of Bridget, more yielding, less energetic: having been from childhood weak in body, he had scarcely bettered his condition in changing one scene of drudgery for another. In the little parlor of the country inn, his long, sad tale of passive suffering was told to the sister's ear. If she wept, it was but for a moment; then talking cheerfully of what the future should be — how they would work together, how they would be dear friends, how they in London would have one common home, and asking nothing from the world, still pay to it one never-failing debt of cheerfulness and sympathy; how they would do all this they said so many times, that the supper grew cold, and poor feeble Tom laughed outright. They parted that summer's night; there was comfort when Bridget promised that a letter should come soon. She did not even hint the joy that should be in it.

Once more in London, she began that very week to build a home for Tom. By a little help from her Long Acre friends, she procured some few pupils,

whose parents, being ambitious to adorn their parlor walls at the cheapest rate, had their children initiated into the mysteries of art at sixpence the lesson. Sixteen lessons a week made eight shillings — little enough to exist upon ; but it yet hired a room and bought bread, and something like the consciousness of independence. At night, too, there were hours to work in ; and then the practice of wood engraving went nimbly on.

In returning home once a week, from a distant part of London, Bridget had to pass in an obscure street an old bookstall. She sometimes stopped to look upon it ; she always did so when she had seen upon it an old thumbed copy of Bewick's British Birds. In those rare tailpieces, that never were surpassed, one who knew all the difficulties of the art found infinite delight. She was observed one evening by a gentleman who had come up to the bookstall some minutes after Bridget ; like her, too, he was curious in art, and wondered what this young poor-clad female could find of interest in one or two small pictured pages, not hastily turned over, but dwelt upon long, minute after minute. He followed, but her light step soon left him far behind : he came again — there she was, on the same day week, with that same old thumbed Bewick. Weeks went by in this manner, till the stall keeper, remembering her often-seen face, bade her

“buy or else not touch the books again;” and Bridget, creeping away like one guilty of a misdeed, saw not that the curious gentleman had bought the books, and now followed her with speedy foot. This time he might have found her home, but that, in a street leading into Holborn, some papers fell from the little roll of drawings she carried; he stooped to pick them up—in the moment of glancing at them she was lost to sight.

Now that night labor had made her somewhat proficient in the art, she tried to get employment; but for weeks without success. Specimens sent in to engravers were returned, letters to publishers unheeded; letters or specimens from Long Acre were of a surety inadmissible. The master who had taught her was dead. At last there was pointed out to her an advertisement in one of the daily papers, that engravers upon wood were wanted for the designs of a cheap publication. There was reference to a person of whom Bridget had heard; so, sending first for permission, she was introduced to the advertiser. A subject for illustration was chosen, and a pencil placed in her hand. When the design came out visibly from the paper, the advertiser, shaking his head, said he would consider. This consideration took some weeks; meanwhile a sleepless pillow was that of poor Bridget.

At last the answer came ; he would employ her, but at a very moderate remuneration. Yet here was hope, clear as the noonday's sun ; *here* was the first bright-beaded drop in the cup of the self-helper ; here was hope for Tom ; here matter for the promised letter. The work done, the remuneration coming in, the fruition came ; new yet humble rooms were hired, second-hand furniture bought piece by piece ; and it was a proud night when, alone in her still chamber, the poor despised Lincoln girl thanked Heaven for its holy mercy.

The proverb tells us that good fortune is never single-handed. On the morrow,—it was a wet and rainy day,—Bridget, in passing into Spring Gardens, observed that the stall of a poor lame apple woman had been partly overturned by some rude urchin. She stopped to help the woman, and whilst so doing, a very fat old gentleman came up, and looking, very quietly remarked, in a sort of audible whisper to himself, “ Curious, very curious ! this same very little act of mercy first introduced me to my excellent Tom : ay, ay ! Tom's gone ; there isn't such another from Eastcheap to Chelsea.”

The name of Tom was music to Bridget's ears. The old gentleman had moved away ; but following quickly, Bridget addressed him.

"I have a brother, sir, whose name is ——"

"Tom," interrupted the old gentleman; "find me my 'Tom's equal, and I'll say something to you. Here is my address." He thrust a card into Bridget's hand, and went on. Here was a romantic omen of good for Tom.

That same night the letter was indited. Two days after, the country wagon deposited Tom in the great city. An hour after, he sat by Bridget's hearth.

"This night repays me for all past sorrow," said the sister, as she sat hand in hand by her brother's side. "Years ago, in those lonely winter nights, something like a dream of this same happy hour would come before me. Indeed it did, dear Tom."

Each thing within those same two narrow rooms had a history; the cuckoo clock itself would have furnished matter for a tale; the six chairs and the one table were prodigies.

On the morrow, Tom, guided by the address, found out the office of the fat old gentleman, who, being a bachelor and an attorney, held pleasant chambers in Clement's Inn. Whether induced by Tom's appearance or his name, we know not, but the old gentleman, after certain inquiries at the coachmaker's in Long Acre, took Tom for his clerk at the salary of six shillings a week.

We must now allow weeks to pass by. In the mean while, Bridget's work increased, though not the money paid for it. Yet out of these same earnings a small sum was laid by, for what our Lincoln girl breathed to no living ear. About this time, better work was heard of, but application for it, through the person who employed her, failed; how, she knew not. "If I had a friend," she said, "I might succeed; and though Richard has passed me in the streets unheeded, still I will make one last appeal to him." She went, not in rags, but decently attired.

"That you are rich, and above me in circumstances, I know, Richard," she humbly said; "hitherto you have scorned to own one so poor; but as I have never wronged you or your name, you will perhaps say that I am your sister?"

"I made your fortune once," he bitterly answered; "of your *honest purposes* since then I know nothing. For the rest, it is not convenient for a man in my condition to have pauper friends—you have my answer."

"Brother," she said, as she obeyed the haughty gesture that signalled her to leave the room, "may you regret the words you have so harshly spoken. For the rest, believe me, I shall yet succeed, in spite of all this opposition."

The peace of Bridget's home was now broken by weekly letters from Lincoln for loan of money, which applications being successful for a few times, only made the letters more urgent and pressing in their demands.

Some months after Bridget's interview with Richard, there sat, one winter's evening, in the study of a celebrated author, three gentlemen. The one was the author himself, as widely known for his large human loving heart as for the books he had written. He had now been for some days translating a child's story from the German, a sort of spiritual child's book, like the Story without an End.

"Were this book illustrated by one who had the same self-helping soul as its author, the same instinctive feeling," said the translator to one of his friends, "it would indeed be priceless. I have sometimes thought none but a woman could catch the simple yet deep maternal feeling that lies in these same pages; but where is ——"

"There is a woman capable of this," said one of the friends, turning to the author; beyond all doubt capable. Look here."

He drew forth from a pocket book the very papers which, two years before, Bridget had lost.

"You say true," answered the translator; "but

what is this? It seems like the copy of some carved foliage, some ——”

“This must be Bridget’s,” interrupted the other guest, leaning across the table with anxious face, (for it was no other than the minster prebend;) “I see it is; yes, yes, a copy of the antique carving from the minster wall. Good things have been said in Lincoln of this Bridget, but the father would never tell where she was.”

The enthusiastic old gentleman now entered into a long detail of Bridget’s youth, which, coupled with the other gentleman’s story, left no doubt that the peeper into the thumbed copy of Bewick and the Lincoln girl were one and the same.

Next day, anxious inquiries were set on foot respecting Bridget, but without effect. Then weeks went by, and in the mean while the German book could find no fit illustrator. But at last the wood cuts in the cheap periodical, for which Bridget engraved, were remarked upon. The man who had the name of being both the artist and engraver was applied to, and he agreed to furnish the desired illustrations. A few were sent in, surpassing the author’s hopes; but a stray leaf, a graceful touch, brought to memory the hand of Bridget. Yet she could not be heard of, though the old Lincoln gentleman was indefatigable in his inquiries.

At length, one night the prebend and his friend were returning along the Strand, in a westerly direction, when by St. Clement's Daines they observed a very fat old gentleman creeping slowly along the pavement, whilst a diminutive youth kept watch and guard, now right, now left, as either side seemed likely to be jostled by some rude passer by.

"You shall go no farther," at length said the old gentleman, stopping short ; "not an inch farther. Go ! give my love to your sister, you dog, and say that I have to thank her for introducing to me a second incomparable Tom."

But the boy was so far incomparable, that, being wilful and obstinate, he would see the old gentleman safe within New Inn, which was near at hand ; and the friends, waiting outside, staid till the boy returned, for his voice had brought to the prebend's ear that of Bridget. They followed him into Long Acre, up two pair of stairs, where, lifting the latch, the prebend beheld the same Bridget whom he had known at Lincoln, while his companion recognized, in the same person, her whom he had followed years ago. A good fire burnt upon the hearth, Tom's tea ready, his shoes and his coat by the fire ; for the night was wet, and Bridget herself busily at work upon the illustration of the German story. Happy was the meeting

between the old man and her he almost thought his child ; strange the feelings of the gentleman who had bought the thumbed Bewick, and hoarded those poor drawings. We have not room to tell the joy of that night.

From this hour Bridget had worthy friends. The morrow brought the sister of the one who had remembered Bridget at the bookstall. He was the same rich city merchant who so unknowingly had praised Bridget's first work and act of mercy. When he heard from the worthy coachmaker that story, when he knew from Tom what a sister Bridget was, when the old prebend said so many kindly things, no wonder that admiration ripened into love. By the hand of his sister (who was his housekeeper) all manner of graceful acts were performed, all manner of good fortune offered ; but nothing could shake Bridget's self-helping resolves, no promises induce her to quit poor, humble, trusting Tom : the only help she asked was that of work to be done. The excellent prebend, returning to Lincoln, spoke much of Bridget, which good report of fortune coming to her father's ears, he presently resolved (as his wife was now dead) to make one home serve for himself and Bridget. So coming to London, he was soon comfortable ; exacting money, craving for delicacies, not caring how they were to

be procured, till their once happy home became one of misery to Tom and Bridget.

Months went by, often during which it was mercy to escape to the home of her kind city friends, even for a few hours. The house that they occupied in summer time—it was now that season—was situated a few miles from town, and here one evening the rich merchant asked Bridget to be his wife.

“You might live to regret marriage with one so poor as myself, sir,” was her answer; “you who could ask the hand of ladies of wealth and beauty.”

“Wealth of money, Bridget, but not with thy wealth of soul. Money is an advantage which the many have; but the heroism of self-help in women is rare because few are so willing to be self-helpers. It is I who will be made rich in having you. I know that time would prove it. Come, my home must be yours.”

Bridget did at last consent, but with a reservation which must be yet a secret. Whatever was its purpose, it was a resolve not to be shaken; but as time wore on, many were the protestations against this resolution. At length, after days and weeks of indefatigable labor, Bridget asked the old prebend and the merchant to meet her at the chambers of Tom's master. They did so. Tom was there, as well as the fat old gentleman, the one looking sly because he knew

the secret, the other wonderingly. The old gentleman signed some papers, which an old clerk attested; then Bridget, drawing forth a purse of gold, laid the fees upon the parchment of Tom's indenture as articulated clerk.

"This was my reservation, this my secret. As I have now shown myself a humble, loving sister of this dear Tom, so I am now willing to become the wife."

A week after, Bridget stood as the wife of the rich city merchant by the altar of Lincoln minster; and dear as the marriage ring was on that day was the gift of the old thumbed copy of Bewick's British Birds.

Habits of self-help, like all good things, are enduring. Bridget, as the wife and mother, is still the same, losing no opportunity of self-culture, no power of being the best teacher to her children.

Tom is at this time a quaint bachelor attorney, having succeeded to the snug practice of the fat gentleman. That there exists between him and Bridget a rare and enduring love, we need not make record.

Of the death of the father we need not speak. Over the selfishness, the pride of the elder brother, we will draw a veil, for the memory of good is better than the memory of evil. Bridget had triumph enough in the fruition of honest labor.

JOSEPHINE,

EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH.

BY MARY E. HEWITT.

JOSEPHINE ROSE TASCHER DE LA PAGERIE was born at Martinique on the 24th of June, 1763. At a very early age she came to Paris, where she married the Viscount Beauharnais, a man of talent and superior personal endowments, but not a courtier, as some writers have asserted, for he was never even presented at court. Beauharnais was a man of limited fortune, and his wife's dower more than doubled his income. In 1787, Madame Beauharnais returned to Martinique to nurse her aged mother, whose health was in a declining state; but the disturbances which soon after took place in that colony drove her back to France. During her absence, the revolution had broken out; and on her return, she found her husband entirely devoted to those principles upon which the regeneration of the French people was to be founded.

The well-known opinions of the Viscount Beauharnais gave his wife considerable influence with the rulers of blood, who stretched their reeking sceptre over the whole nation; and she had frequent opportunities, which she never lost, of saving persons doomed by their sanguinary decrees. Among others, Mademoiselle de Bethisy was condemned, by the revolutionary tribunal, to be beheaded; but Madame Beauharnais, by her irresistible intercession, succeeded in obtaining the life and freedom of this interesting lady. The revolution, however, devouring, like Saturn, its own children, spared none of even its warmest supporters, the moment they came in collision with the governing party, then composed of ignorant and bloodthirsty enthusiasts. The slightest hesitation in executing any of their decrees, however absurd or impracticable, was considered a crime deserving of death. Beauharnais had been appointed general-in-chief of the army of the North. Having failed to attend to some foolish order of the convention, he was cited to appear at its bar and give an account of his conduct. No one appeared before this formidable assembly, but to take, immediately after, the road to the guillotine; and such was the case with the republican general Beauharnais. He was tried and condemned, and, on the 23d of July, 1794, he was publicly beheaded at the

Place de la Révolution. Meantime, his wife had been thrown into prison, where she remained until Robespierre's death, expecting each day to be led out to execution. Having at length recovered her freedom, she joined her children, Eugene and Hortense, who had been taken care of during their mother's captivity by some true and devoted though humble friends. After the establishment of the Directory, Madame Tallien became all-powerful with the director Barras, to whom she introduced Madame Beauharnais.

Bonaparte at length became passionately attached to Madame Beauharnais, and married her on the 17th of February, 1796. She accompanied him to Italy, where by her powers of pleasing she charmed his toils, and by her affectionate attentions soothed his disappointments when rendered too bitter by the impediments which the jealousy of the directory threw in the way of his victories.

Bonaparte loved Josephine with great tenderness; and this attachment can be expressed in no words but his own. In his letters, published by Queen Hortense, it may be seen how ardently his soul of fire had fixed itself to hers, and mixed up her life with his own. These letters form a striking record. A woman so beloved, and by such a man, could have been no ordinary person.

When Napoleon became sovereign of France, after having proved its hero, he resolved that his crown should also grace the brows of Josephine.

With his own hand he placed the small crown upon her head, just above the diamond band which encircled her forehead. It was evident that he felt intense happiness in thus honoring the woman he loved, and making her share his greatness.

It was truly marvellous to see Josephine at the Tuileries, on grand reception days, as she walked through the *Gallerie de Diane* and the *Salle des Maréchaux*. Where did this surprising woman acquire her royal bearing? She never appeared at one of these splendid galas of the empire without exciting a sentiment of admiration, and of affection too; for her smile was sweet and benevolent, and her words mild and captivating, at the same time that her appearance was majestic and imposing.

She had some very gratifying moments during her greatness, if she afterwards encountered sorrow. The marriage of her son Eugene to the Princess of Bavaria, and that of her niece to the Prince of Baden, were events of which she might well be proud. Napoleon seemed to study how he could please her—he seemed happy but in her happiness.

He generally yielded to her entreaties, for the

manner in which she made a request was irresistible. Her voice was naturally harmonious, like that of most creoles, and there was a peculiar charm in every word she uttered. I once witnessed, at Malmaison, an instance of her power over the emperor. A soldier of the guard, guilty of some breach of discipline, had been condemned to a very severe punishment. Marshal Bessières was anxious to obtain the man's pardon; but as Napoleon had already given his decision, there was no hope unless the empress undertook the affair. She calmly listened to the marshal, and, having received all the information necessary, said, with her musical voice and bewitching smile,—

“I will try if I can obtain the poor man's pardon.”

When the emperor returned to the drawing room, we all looked to see the expression his countenance would assume when she mentioned the matter to him. At first he frowned, but, as the empress went on, his brow relaxed; he then smiled, looked at her with his sparkling eyes, and said, kissing her forehead,—

“Well, let it be so for this once; but, Josephine, mind you do not acquire a habit of making such applications.”

He then put his arm round her waist, and again tenderly kissed her. Now, what spell had she employed

to produce such an effect? Merely a few words, and a look, and a smile; but each was irresistible.

Then came days of anguish and regret. She had given no heir to Napoleon's throne, and all hope of such an event was now past. This wrung her heart; for it was a check to Napoleon's ambition of family greatness, and a disappointment to the French nation. The female members of Napoleon's family disliked the empress,—they were perhaps jealous of her influence,—and the present opportunity was not lost to impress upon the emperor the necessity of a divorce. At length he said to Josephine,—

“We must separate; I must have an heir to my empire.”

With a bleeding heart, she meekly consented to the sacrifice. The particulars of the divorce are too well known to be repeated here.

After this act of self-immolation, Josephine withdrew to Malmaison, where she lived in elegant retirement, unwilling to afflict the emperor with the news of her grief, and wearing a smile of seeming content which but ill veiled the sorrows of her heart. Yet she was far from being calm; and in the privacy of friendship, the workings of her affectionate nature would sometimes burst forth. But she was resigned; and what more could be required from a broken heart?

On the birth of the King of Rome, when Providence at length granted the emperor an heir to his thrones, Josephine experienced a moment of satisfaction which made her amends for many days of bitterness. All her thoughts and hopes were centred in Napoleon and his glory, and the consummation of his wishes was to her a source of pure and unutterable satisfaction.

“My sacrifice will at least have been useful to him and to France,” she said, with tearful eyes. But they were tears of joy. Yet this joy was not unalloyed; and the feeling which accompanied it was the more bitter because it could not be shown. It was, however, betrayed by these simple and affecting words uttered in the most thrilling tone:—

“Alas! why am I not his mother?”

When the disasters of the Russian campaign took place, she was certainly much more afflicted than the woman who filled her place at the Tuileries. When in private with any who were intimate with her, she wept bitterly.

The emperor's abdication and exile to Elba cut her to the soul.

“Why did I leave him?” she said, on hearing that he had set out alone for Elba; “why did I consent to this separation? Had I not done so, I should

now be by his side, to console him in his misfortunes."

Josephine died at Malmaison, on the 29th of May, 1814, after a few days' illness. Her two children were with her during her last moments.

Her body was buried in the Church of Ruel. Every person of any note then at Paris attended her funeral. She was universally regretted by foreigners as well as by Frenchmen; and she obtained, as she deserved, a tribute to her memory, not only from the nation whose empress she had once been, but from the whole of Europe, whose proudest sovereigns had once been at her feet.

LESSONS IN THE SCHOOL OF LIFE.

BY MRS. JAMES WHITTLE.

“WHAT did my aunt mean, when she said to you this morning that my education would never be finished? Surely, mamma, I am not always to remain at school. I am sure I often wish the time were come, when, instead of having to leave you at the end of every holiday, I could always stay with you, dear mamma, and wait on you, and nurse you, and try to amuse you, when you look so sad, and so weary; and sometimes it seems to me that I learn more in listening to you, and hearing you read to me, than I do from all the regular lessons I learn during the whole half-year. Do you know, mamma, I remember every thing you tell me, while all that I learn by heart, to say to Miss Brewster, is forgotten in a minute. When shall I leave school, and be always with you?”

The little girl, as she asked this question, looked

eagerly into her mother's face, and saw that large tears were rolling down her cheeks. Fearful lest she had been the cause, she threw her little arms round her neck, and kissed her again and again. The mother raised her languid head from her pillow, as she replied, "Fanny, sit down beside me, on the sofa, and let me tell you what your aunt and I mean, when we say that your education will never be finished. While we live, we may still learn something, and the school in which you at present study is only the first class in that wider school, the world, in which, by-and-by, you will have to take your place, —in which I, Fanny, am a scholar."

"You, mamma, a scholar? Why, you are a woman —a wise, grown-up woman. You have no lessons to learn, no tasks to repeat, no punishments to bear, no"—

"Stay, Fanny, I have all these. I have many lessons to learn daily, many tasks to perform, many punishments to endure. Do you think that I lie here on this sofa, day after day, and month after month, without learning any thing?"

"Oh no, mamma! You are always reading large, wise books."

"Yes, my dear child; but it is not always from

books that we learn lessons in the great school I told you of. Life is bestowed upon us by God; that great and good Being, who creates nothing in vain, had some wise purpose in breathing into each of us the breath of life; it is for us to find out what particular task God has apportioned to us; to learn what this is, is the important lesson which must be studied in the great school of life."

"But, mamma," said Fanny, after a longer pause than was usual with her, "how can a little girl hope to find out what God intends her to do? God cannot care whether my lessons are said well or not; what can I do, that can please God, or show Him that I am wishing to find out what He intends me to do?"

"You can do what you know to be right in the school in which you are for the present placed; you can learn to be obedient to those who are older and wiser than yourself; you can be kind and affectionate to your schoolfellows, willing to give up your own will to theirs; you can be careful not to resent any unkind word which may be said to you; you may help those who are weaker than yourself; you may comfort any who are unhappy; and if, amongst your playfellows, one has done a wrong action, you may, perhaps, by kindly pointing out to her the harm she has done,

induce her to strive in future to avoid all sin. These duties, my little girl, belong to your position as a schoolfellow; and the same duties, rightly and faithfully discharged, make good men and women, good servants and good masters, good parents and good friends, good statesmen and good kings. Greater duty there is none, whether in you, as a little child, or in the queen upon her throne, than that you should do unto others what you would wish others to do unto you. And this, Fanny, is *one* of the lessons that we all have to learn in the great school of life. Another, and far more difficult one, is that of bending our wishes to the will of our Father in Heaven. You, who are happy and gay, to whom sorrow seems a thing still far distant, a sort of awful stranger, who may one day come into your home, but who is as yet unknown to you, may think it an easy thing to say those words, which daily you repeat: 'Thy will be done;' but, Fanny, dear, it needs a brave heart, and a firm trust in God, to say that little sentence when sorrow really comes; when Death first enters our home, and takes away the little girl from her mamma, or perhaps the mother from her child; then it is that we must learn the hard task of *submission*; and many are the tears

that are shed ere that difficult lesson be learned. Or it may be that sickness comes, as it has come to me, Fanny, binding me like a prisoner, with fetters of pain, to one spot; depriving me of all my former pleasures, and rendering me useless to others. To bear the pain that never leaves me, to lie here, and never again go forth into the fields with you, and show you the glorious works of God, there set before us—to do this, and be patient and content, and be able to say, ‘Thy will be done,’ is not an easy thing; and this, Fanny, is the lesson I study daily.”

The little maiden’s eyes were full of tears; she knelt beside the couch, hid her face in her mother’s bosom and was silent. Then looking up, a smile brightened her sweet face, as she said, “And yet, mamma, you are happy; no one smiles as you do, no one looks more cheerful;” then, after a minute’s pause, she added, “Ah! mamma, I see it all now; you have learned *your* lessons *well*, and as I am never unhappy when I do and say all my governess requires from me, so you are happy, because you have learned to do and say all that God requires of you.”

The mother smiled, and said, “Not *all*, my child;” but her heart was glad that Fanny had thus learned one of the lessons of Life’s Great School.

LOVE AND AMBITION;

OR, THE OLD MAN AND THE ROSE.

It is not very long ago since the aged Marchese di B—— used to be seen occasionally within the walls of our “fair Florence,”* visiting her noble works of art and aiding her Institutions by his counsels and his liberality. This venerable man, after having spent the flower of his years in the public service of his country, and filled with credit the highest offices of the state, had, on the approach of old age, withdrawn into an honorable retirement, where his days rolled on in the enjoyment of literary ease and kindly benevolence.

Rarely did he quit his beautiful Villa, except for a brief visit to some of the Italian cities, where he loved to seek out the remains of antiquity, or to wander through the noble picture-galleries, with which so many of them abound. On such occasions, he was

* “Firenze la Bella.”

went to leave behind him his numerous retinue of servants, and set out in a modest equipage, accompanied only by a confidential valet, and a favorite nephew, whose enthusiastic love of the *beaux-arts* made him a suitable companion in such excursions.

One day they were visiting together a celebrated picture-gallery. The guide who accompanied them passed along from one *chef-d'œuvre* to another, descending fluently on their various merits, and scarcely deigning to stop a moment before any works of lesser note. They stood before a painting of Titian's, and the guide had commenced his accustomed panegyric, when he perceived that the old gentleman was gazing intently on a work of inferior merit, which hung close to Titian's gorgeous painting. It represented a youthful lady, simply yet elegantly clad, who was in the act of placing in her bosom a rose, on which she gazed with a gentle smile, as if it were the bearer of some message of kindness or of love. Her countenance beamed with ingenuous candor, and the innocent brightness of her glance added to the loveliness of her features.

The old man appeared to be fascinated by the portrait which absorbed his whole attention, so that he allowed the guide to go on with his professional story

without giving the slightest heed to what he was talking about. The latter, observing this *engouement*, stepped back a little, and pointing to the lady's portrait, said aloud: "It must be conceded that this also is a good painting. It is by Francisco Porbus, a distinguished portrait painter. The subject is unknown; but it may readily be perceived that the likeness is an admirable one, for it breathes life in every feature. The position is full of grace....the coloring of the flesh is faultless....What transparency! what light! Observe the harmony subsisting between the white robe and the dark upper garment, although the tints contrast so strongly...." But at this moment, a gay young noble entered, with all the airs of a fashionable connoisseur; and the guide, leaving his discourse unfinished, hastened to welcome the new comer with a profusion of bows, leaving the old man still entranced before the unknown portrait.

Rousing himself at length from his reverie, and drawing a deep sigh, the Marchese addressed his nephew, on whose arm he was leaning, and whom, unconsciously, he had in the depth of his emotion almost pressed to his bosom.

"Be not surprised," said the old man, "at the lengthened contemplation I bestow upon this unknown

picture. It revives the saddest and yet sweetest emotion that was ever awakened within my breast. I was like unto thee; in all the vigor of my youth—beloved by my parents—surrounded by every earthly good—heedless about the future—little dreaming of the luminous career (as flatterers call it) which I should afterwards pursue. It was at sunset, in the dear and joyous month of May, and I was walking with a fellow-student in his garden. His only sister was with us. Her features did not resemble this lady's, but she had the same sweet and ingenuous countenance, and like her, she was dressed with perfect simplicity, unadorned, save by one beauteous rose which she had gathered while we were standing together gazing on the glorious sunset. I almost mechanically plucked one from the same branch, and after a few moments' silent admiration, we pursued our walk. While conversing together, my fair companion's flower dropped out of her hand, whereupon I hastily picked it up and offered her mine in its stead. She accepted it with a smile, and placed it in her bosom, worn as is represented in the picture before us. I cannot describe the happiness which at that moment filled my breast: but too soon the impression wore away, for it was about that time that I obtained my

first official employment. It is true, that I accepted it out of obedience to my father's wishes, for no dream of ambition had yet bewildered my mind; but before long its snares were successfully spread around me; and amid the smiles of princes, and the adulation of courtiers, the image of my fair young friend gradually faded out of my thoughts. I scarcely knew that I had loved her, until, in a time of mental anxiety and deep disappointment, I bethought me of the young maiden and the rose. Her image floated across my vision, like those refreshing waters which are often seen afar off in the desert, but which vanish from the longing gaze of the traveller as he approaches nearer unto them. Even so did the idea of domestic love and peace pass like a pleasing dream before me amid the turmoils of public life; but such moments of happy thought were rare and fleeting. I had entered a career of emulation, and could not bear to be surpassed by my rivals in fame. Titles, honors, wealth, luxury, all these have I attained; and yet, on looking back at my long and brilliant course, my thoughts rest with pleasure only upon the one bright yet tranquil hour which preceded all this glory. Now, all is over—early love....manly ambition....successful pride....But amid the many favors scattered around my

path, I have slighted the only one which could have brought a daily sunshine into my domestic life.”

The old man ceased, and after a moment's pause, he added, with a deep sigh : —

“ My friend, when these eyes are closed in death, suffer not a deceiving hand to record in marble that I was great and good, and wise and happy ; but take care, I charge you, to have a simple rose sculptured upon my tomb.”

MADAME GOETZENBERGER'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

BY MARY HOWITT.

I WISH you had all been at old Frau Goetzenberger's last Christmas Eve! But as you were not, and as you know nothing about it, the best thing I can do is to tell you exactly how it was, who was there, and what came of it.

Old Frau Goetzenberger lived, or rather lives—but we will speak of it in the past tense—she lived, I say, in an old university town in the south of Germany; a very old-fashioned town it was, with all sorts of old memories and traditions connected with it. The university, with its tall, red roof, looked as dark and ancient as the church, which had a tall, red roof to correspond; and the church looked quite as old as the gray limestone rocks which stood up, like huge, frowning walls, round the little town.

Not far from the university stood a large, heavy, dismal-looking stone building, like a great, gloomy

town hall; the lower front windows, which looked upon the street, were all guarded with strong iron work, composed of upright bars, with iron scrolls among them, which gave it very much the appearance of a prison. In the centre of this building was a wide, round-arched gateway, in the projecting keystone of which grinned a stone face. The face protruded its tongue from its leering mouth, its nose was curled up, and its ears were of an unusual length. It was, upon the whole, as ugly a face as you would wish to see, and it seemed to grin down upon every body who approached the gateway. So wide was this gateway, that a coach and four might have driven into it; and on either hand, soon after you entered, you came to a wide, stone staircase, with iron balustrades, which led up to the dwellings of many families — of a dozen, at least — who inhabited this great, old house, most of them being professors or students, belonging to the university.

Between this old house and the university lay a large garden, full of trees and walks, and with a fountain, which fell into a great stone basin, in the middle of a grass plat, which was not, I am sorry to say, by any means neatly kept, for two or three milk women cut the grass with sickles for their cows. This garden, to a certain extent, was public; that is,

was common to about a dozen different houses opening into it, and which were all occupied, more or less, by people connected with the university, who had thus, as it were, a privileged private entrance, either to the great university library, or to ordinary lectures and classes. Hence it was that the houses opening into this *universitäts garten*, as it was called, brought a higher rent than any others, and the people residing there were looked upon as the *élite*; it was, in fact, the Belgravia of the town.

On the principal floor of that great old house with the grinning face over the door, lived the most celebrated professor in the whole university — the Herr von Hoffman, professor of Roman law; a very learned man, whose fame extended over all Germany. So great, indeed, was he, that the king, not many years before, had presented him with a patent of nobility, and hence it was that he had *von* before his name. He was, in fact, the Herr Baron von Hoffman; but he preferred being called simply the Herr Professor, because he had more pleasure in being a great teacher than in being a baron. He was not, however, an old man; he was only a little turned forty, and this was his first year at the famous old university when I introduce him to your knowledge.

He was a very quiet, domestic man, was this

Professor von Hoffman, and there was nothing in the world which he wished so much for as a sweet-tempered, good, little wife, and a dear, happy family of pretty children. When he was only twenty, and a student at the old University of Greifswald, his domestic wishes were just the same. But he was a very poor man in those days; nevertheless, he made up his mind to marry as soon as he was able to maintain a wife and family; and more than that, to marry no one else than the pretty Ida, the youngest daughter of old Professor Schmidt, under whom he had studied Roman law; and the sweet-tempered and pretty Ida had promised to be his wife whenever he should be ready to offer her a home. But things did not fall out as either the student Eberhard or his fair Ida hoped. Old Professor Schmidt would not consent to part with his daughter Ida, who was his favorite. He was, unfortunately, a very sour-tempered, obstinate old gentleman; he said that Eberhard was too poor to marry, and could not afford to have a wife. In this way year after year went on; Ida's sister Marie married, and went away to her husband's home, and her mother, the old professor's wife, died, and then there was nobody left to look after him but poor Ida, and, what was worst of all, the old gentleman's temper grew still more and more tyrannical, because he

now suffered so much from rheumatism and toothache.

There did not now seem to be the least chance in the world that Ida could ever leave her father. Eberhard had been away two years, and he grew very impatient. He had risen from *privat docent*, without any salary, to be professor of Roman law in the University of Tübingen. He now could abundantly afford to maintain that dear little wife that was only wanted to complete his happiness; so he wrote to Ida, saying that she must consent to marry him at once, and that, to make all easy and agreeable, the old gentleman, her father, should live with them. Ida was delighted with the proposal; not so the old professor. For what was he to leave Greifswald? No, he had no intention of leaving it! He had not many years to live, and he was not going to be torn up by the roots for any body! It would be the death of him. No, no; he should stop at Greifswald, and Ida might leave him, if she liked; but he would never give his blessing to an undutiful child!

It was very hard both on Ida and her lover. They waited yet a while longer; but Tübingen was a very dull place, and all the professors there were married excepting Eberhard. So at last he wrote to Ida, saying that if she could not marry him, he must look out

for another wife. He quite expected that this would have determined Ida, by one means or another, to obtain her father's consent; but, instead of that, Ida, who was the most generous-hearted and most self-forgetting creature in the world, could not again anger and distress her old father by urging her wishes, and, as she knew what a loving, domestic heart was Eberhard's, and that without family life he could not be happy, she wrote, in reply, that though it broke her heart, she must give him up, for that, to leave her old father in his present state was impossible. She returned to him, therefore, the betrothal ring which she had faithfully worn so many years, and, with anguish of heart and many tears, of which she said nothing, sent off her letter.

The professor received the ring, and read the letter with the deepest grief, disappointment, and some little anger. He believed that Ida's love for him was nothing in comparison with what he had felt for her. He returned to her the ring which he too had worn with equal fidelity, with a long letter, which, instead of comforting, only added to her misery. For several weeks he felt very unhappy and desolate; but all his married friends and acquaintance thought it their duty to be doubly kind to him. What sisters, and nieces, and cousins, all beautiful young ladies,

were introduced to him at suppers and little tea parties, which were got up expressly for the occasion ! And at length it appeared to him that the beautiful Caroline, only daughter of the rich Oberst or Colonel Hoffman, might probably fill the place in his heart left vacant by the loss of his Ida. Caroline, or Lina, as she was called, was reckoned a great match, for her father not only wore many orders at his button hole, but was possessed of a handsome estate and house in the Saxon Switzerland, which, having come to the colonel by his wife, would pass direct to his daughter on his death, with the simple condition of her husband taking the name of Hoffman. A very good match was this for the professor, who, though he was growing into great reputation for learning, had nothing but his head to make money by, and his good heart to make a wife happy with ; and these do not always rank as high in value as gold and silver, houses and lands.

The professor married the beautiful Lina, and not long afterwards, her father dying, her husband came into possession of the fine house and estate in the Saxon Switzerland, and assumed the excellent name of Hoffman, henceforth dropping his own undignified family name of Grün, and by which he had been betrothed to Ida Schmidt. The next event that

occurred to him was the birth of a little daughter, who was called, after her mother, Lina; and soon afterwards he received from his sovereign that patent of nobility which I have mentioned, and which was bestowed upon him in consequence of his great learning, and henceforth he was the Herr Baron von Hoffman.

But wonderful as was the professor's outward prosperity, his domestic happiness was not destined to be of very long continuance. Four years after his marriage, his wife died, leaving him no other child than his little Lina, then about three years old. Very desolate was now the professor's heart and home. As time went on, and the acuteness of the grief caused by the death of his wife a little wore off, he thought about equally of Ida, his first love, and Lina, his child's mother. People wondered that he did not marry again. With his reputation, his title, and his fine estate in the Saxon Switzerland, he might marry any lady in the land. I believe he knew that very well; but, as I said before, he thought a great deal about poor Ida and her hard life with the cross old gentleman, her father. He thought so much, indeed, that five years after his wife's death, when his little Lina was eight years old, he set off during the university *ferien*, or holidays, on a journey to the north,

taking Greifswald in his way. He did not tell a single soul that he did so, but I mention it to you in confidence.

Well, the first thing he did when he arrived at Greifswald was to inquire after old Professor Schmidt and his family. He made his inquiries from an old woman who was knitting by the side of a wood, while a white goat, fastened to her apron string by a long chain, was feeding, and she was keeping two cows, which were likewise grazing, within bounds.

"Of Herr Professor Schmidt ask you?" said the old woman; "he's been dead and buried these six years."

"And Fräulein Ida?"

"No; she's not here. She was an angel! What a daughter she was! She never thought her duty hard; and yet it is unknown what she had to bear, and yet I know, for I was sick nurse in that family for years. Ah, Fräulein Ida! she would have made any man happy; she was such an angel; many's the good chance for herself that she sacrificed to her duty to her father. You never knew Fräulein Ida, then?" asked the old woman.

The professor made a sort of sound which she understood to mean no; therefore she went on: "Then you never knew what an angel she was? She was

cruelly used, sir, by a student; but he's a learned professor now, they tell me; one Eberhard Grün. You, may be, may know him, and can tell me what's become of him, for he studied in Greifswald?"

Again the professor made that peculiar sound which passed for a negative, and the old woman went on: "No; I dare say you don't; but no good could come to him, that's certain. He's married, however, and he was betrothed to Fräulein Ida for several years. I never shall forget her reading of his marriage to her father, for she always read the newspapers to him, and he would have every word: she dropped down in a fainting fit when she read that, and if it had not been for me, who had just come in to tell the Herr Professor that his bran bath was ready, she would have fallen on the stove. Poor Fräulein Ida! And when her friends said to her, as many did at first, how heartless was that Eberhard Grün to leave her as he had done, she used to say, with tears in her eyes, 'Don't blame him. I don't blame him myself. It is a good thing if he does not suffer as I do; and I hope he doesn't.' That was the way she talked. But she's gone from Greifswald now," continued the old woman. "When the Herr Professor died, he left her nothing but his books and papers, and they were not worth much; and soon after his

death, Mrs. Bernhard, the eldest daughter, died also: she had been a widow some years, but she was well off; she left a child, a beautiful little girl, to Fräulein Ida's care, with a small legacy, which brings her in a little income, and after that Fräulein Ida and her little orphan niece went to live with an old aunt of the late Herr Bernhard, but where nobody knows. They did live at Cassell for a time, but they are gone away; but go where she will, Heaven's blessing will light on her, sooner or later; of that I am sure."

"Perhaps," said the Herr Professor von Hoffman, in a voice which was very husky, but which the old woman, not knowing him, supposed to be natural to him—"perhaps she may be married by this time?"

The old woman almost screamed at the idea.

"Married!" repeated she; "married by this time!" and, in her impatience, she gave the poor little goat such a sudden pluck by its chain, that, thinking the tuft of yellow ragwort at which it was smelling was some forbidden fruit, it set up a sharp bleat, and gave a great leap so far in a contrary direction, that the old woman was pulled in her turn. "Married by this time!" repeated she once more; "you gentlemen know nothing about women! Fräulein Ida Schmidt will never marry any man but Eberhard Grün, because she never can love another as she loved him;

and it may please God to make him worthy of her, because, as the Bible says, all things are possible with God!"

"Amen!" said the professor, strangely affected.

The old woman went after her goat, which had now grown very wayward; and he pursued a solitary path which led deep into the wood, and which, in those far-distant days, which the old woman had so sadly recalled, he and his beloved Ida had often trod together.

The tidings which the professor had thus obtained left him in no state of mind to call on any of his old friends in Greifswald. He continued his journey into the north, even as far as Upsala, where, in the library of the old university, he added still more to his amazing amount of learning, and then returned to Tübingen, where he delivered his lectures as formerly.

The next thing that happened to him was, that he was appointed by government to take the law professor's chair in that still more famous university where we first found him. Hither he removed early in the year, and took up, as I told you, his quarters in the principal suit of rooms in that gloomy old house with the iron-barred windows, and the grinning face over the gateway. His spare hours he spent in arranging and cataloguing his immense library, and

the rest of the day in delivering his famous course of lectures, which very soon brought such an access of students to the university, that, with the tradespeople and the middle classes at large, who lived principally by accommodating students, as well as by all the young ladies who thus were provided with so many more agreeable partners at the public and private balls, he was considered quite a benefactor to the town, and, consequently, was very popular with every one.

There was something, however, peculiar in the professor; every body agreed in this; finding it, nevertheless, not difficult to be accounted for, because he was so very learned, and all learned men were unlike common people; they had a right to be odd, and even disagreeable, if they chose. But disagreeable Professor von Hoffman was not; he was only very grave, and had an anxious, self-absorbed look.

The truth was, though nobody knew it, he was very unhappy about poor Fräulein Ida, and could not get her other sorrows out of his head. It is wonderful what a number of letters he wrote to all parts of Germany, to ascertain, if he could, whither she had betaken herself with her little orphan niece, or where this old Madame Bernhard lived who was aunt to the child's father. But he could obtain no satisfactory information. Now and then he fancied he was upon

the right track ; but when he came to pursue it farther, — and he took many long journeys for this purpose, — it always ended in disappointment.

Thus time wore on. He lived in a dream of hope and disappointment, busied over the endless arrangement of his books, and looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, as he crossed the great university garden to his lectures. On summer afternoons the garden was full of people, who turned out from the surrounding houses. Ladies sat with their knitting on the various benches and under the trees ; children played about, and the milk women cut the grass for their cows. Every body knew him ; but he knew nobody, took notice of nobody. "That is the way," said they, "with all these learned men ; their eyes are turned inwards."

It must have been a very dull, unnatural sort of life for little Lina von Hoffman, if she had had no more cheerful person with her than her father, as he appeared to the world ; but I assure you her life was by no means without its pleasures. In an evening she was with her father, and then came out something of the joy and affection which lived in his large, warm heart. Little Lina knew very well what a glorious and noble human being was her father, and to him she opened all her little heart. She showed him how

her knitting progressed, and how many additional stitches she had done in her Berlin-wool work ; but not a word did she say to him about those beautiful slippers which, soon after midsummer, she had begun to work for him. O, no ! not a word of them ; they were a great secret in her heart, and were to remain so until they should be brought forth by the wonderful Christ-child at Christmas, who, she knew from old experience, would then bring something very charming for her. Of these things Lina spoke to her father, but most of all she spoke of her little friend Sänchen, who lived at the end of the garden, in such pretty rooms, with her old great-aunt Goetzenberger, who was quite, quite blind, yet such a cheerful old lady, and with aunt Ida, who was just like an angel. Lina now knew what angels must be like ; they must be like Sänchen's aunt Ida, if she had only wings. She wore such beautiful light silks ; and she had such lovely hands, and such a beautiful face. O, there never was any lady that smiled as she did.

It was wonderful what pleasure our good professor felt in hearing his darling Lina thus talking of her friends. There was an inexpressible charm to him in that sweet name of Ida. If it had not been for the old lady, and even aunt Ida, as he believed, being called Goetzenberger, he might, perhaps, have

taken it into his head that this might be his own long-lost Ida. But he never did; and when little Lina saw him walking from his afternoon lectures across the garden, and ran to him, saying, "There's aunt Ida!" he never even gave himself the trouble to look at her, but, catching up the child in his arms, carried her to the house with him. Aunt Ida, on her part, saw him only at a distance: there was something about him which painfully reminded her of an old, long-lost lover, and for that very reason she purposely avoided meeting him. She did not wish to walk over the grave, as it were, of those buried feelings, on the death-like repose of which alone depended her own peace of mind.

Little Lina went very often to Frau Goetzenberger's. She found it much more cheerful there than at her own home. Her father's rooms were all lined with dark, old books, piles of which still lay on the floor, and over which she was sure to tumble if she did not take great care; besides which, there was always such a smell of tobacco smoke, for, like all learned Germans, he was a great smoker. "If I had a wife," said he to himself, "I should rarely smoke; but it is now my only amusement." So the rooms were full of a smoke cloud, which circled about her father's head, and curled up into all the dark

corners and into the vacant spaces on the shelves, and which filled the curtains, and even her father's hair, with a never-dying smell of tobacco. Very different were Frau Goetzenberger's rooms. All was light and cheerful there, and a fresh, delicious odor seemed to pervade every thing. The floor of the sitting room was of inlaid wood, which gave a very pretty effect, and a very beautiful carpet of needlework, deeply fringed, was laid before each of the two sofas. On one of these sofas always sat the old blind lady, in her rich black satin and large gray shawl. To look at her, nobody would have supposed her to be blind, for there was nothing unsightly or strange in the appearance of her eyes, and yet they could see no more than if they were stones. She appeared to be, and was really, very cheerful; had learned to go about their rooms by herself; the only difference between herself and other people being that she walked very slowly, feeling her way from point to point, and treading as softly as if her feet had been shod with velvet. She was always employed in knitting, and this prevented time from seeming long to her.

Ida, as little Lina often told her father, was like a gentle, lovely angel; not because she was so young and beautiful, but because she looked so pure and good. Aunt Ida, indeed, was no longer young; she

was considerably turned of thirty ; was thin and pale ; her countenance, to thoughtful observers, looking as if at some former time she had known great sorrow, though now her soul was bright and cheerful in the peace of resignation and faith in God. Her joy lay in the fulfilment of her duty, and this now was no longer painful. She surrounded the blind lady with objects of beauty ; though they could not gladden her sight, still she said their influence was felt. Every thing was elegant and pure. Beautiful flowers in pots stood in the windows, and gathered flowers in a glass vase stood ever on the table, among cheerful-spirited books, from which Ida read at least half the day. Sometimes she played exquisite pieces of music to her ; and this the blind lady loved best of all, for Ida played divinely.

Lina often told her father about aunt Ida's playing, and at length, one evening, Barbet, their maid, accompanied her home, with a request from aunt Ida that the professor would permit his little daughter to take in future her music lesson with Sänchen, which would be such a pleasure to every one. The professor could not object ; he returned a message by Barbet which was satisfactory to all parties. "The Herr Professor von Hoffman was much honored by the interest which the Fräulein Ida Goetzenberger

took in his little daughter's progress in music, and that he should feel infinitely obliged if she would condescend to instruct her with her niece; and that the Herr Professor hoped before long to have the honor of thanking in person the Frau and Fräulein Goetzenberger for the kindness they had so long shown to his little daughter." Barbet was very clever in delivering verbal messages; she did not, therefore, omit or vary one word.

Ida smiled. "My name is not Goetzenberger," said she; "but that is of no moment." From that time little Lina took her lessons with Sänchen, and thus the best understanding grew up between the two families, the heads of which had never as yet spoken to each other. The little girl was much more at Frau Goetzenberger's than at her own home, and thus the professor found his room more desolate than ever. "But never mind," said the good man; "she is much happier with our cheerful neighbors than she can be with me." He sighed and thought of that fair Ida, who existed still, but not for him, and blew tremendous puffs of smoke out of his long, handsomely-painted pipe.

It was now the autumn *ferien*, and a letter came to the professor which took him at once from home. A trusty friend of his had found in Königsberg a

Madame Bernhard and a Fräulein Ida Schmidt, who were living together. They seemed to answer the description of the persons he was in search of, more especially as Fräulein Schmidt, it was said, was from a northern university town. Off, therefore, set our good professor, once more fondly hoping that she whom he had sought so long was at length found. He set off at night, when his little Lina, who had spent the day at the good neighbors', was in bed, and, kissing her in her sleep, and leaving a note for Fräulein Ida, was a long way on his journey before she woke. The note, which little Lina presented next morning, was addressed, as the professor believed correctly, to Fräulein Goetzenberger, and it said that the Professor von Hoffman was suddenly called from home on business of great importance, and begged to commend his little Lina to the kind attentions of Fräulein Ida Goetzenberger during his absence. Again aunt Ida smiled, and remarked that her name was not Goetzenberger, adding, however, that it was not of much importance; and she undertook the charge of little Lina with right good will. The professor had written his note in great haste, and it was such an almost unintelligible scrawl as scarcely ever was seen; but there was for all that a something in the handwriting which made our dear Ida look at it again

and again. "There is a something about it that reminds me of a handwriting that was very dear to me many years ago," sighed she to herself, "but all learned men, to a certain degree, write alike;" and she put the note into her work box.

Little Lina was as welcome as daylight. "It is such an excellent thing," Ida said, "for Sänchen to have a companion of her own age, and besides, little Lina is a very lovable child; there is a something about her which has taken strange hold of my heart;" and so saying, she once more took the note from her work box and read it through, though there was nothing more to puzzle out in it. I can hardly tell why she did so, yet it is a fact nevertheless.

"I am to be your child while papa is away!" said little Lina, throwing her arms round aunt Ida's neck. "I wish you were my mamma, I love you so dearly!"

Poor Ida! the letter, or rather the recollections that it called up, and the words of the child, stirred her heart very strangely. She clasped the little one in her arms, kissed her with tender emotion, and said that from that time she should call her aunt Ida, as little Sänchen did, and they two should be sisters.

The poor professor had a fruitless journey, all that long, long way to Königsberg; he travelled night

and day to find, once more, a disappointment. The Fräulein Ida Schmidt was, he found, older than himself, and the Madame Bernhard was her niece. It was a mistake altogether, and a sad disappointment to the poor professor, who immediately leaving Königsberg made another long journey to Carlsbad, where he determined to spend the autumn *ferien*. In the mean time, all was as happy as could be at the house of Frau Goetzenberger. The children's lessons were joyful amusements; they played together the sweetest little duets; they sang with aunt Ida, and they danced while she played. They wore, at the same time, their white frocks, and their pink frocks; they called each other sister, and they lived as if the relationship had been real.

The days had shortened greatly before the professor returned, and during the long evenings Frau Goetzenberger many a time spoke of her Christmas tree, and of the marvellous things which the Christ-child would lay beneath it. Little Lina had finished the slippers for her papa, and Sänchen was working him a cover for his queer oil-skin tobacco bag, while Lina threaded steel beads on dark-blue netting silk, for the beautiful purse which aunt Ida had begun to knit for him. She had once before, many years ago, knitted such a purse for that very student, Eberhard,

of whom she retained such tender, yet painful recollections. The note which the Professor von Hoffman had sent her about his little Lina must indeed have had a strange effect upon her, for it was the sight of that very note which had determined her to make just such another purse for him. She was now, therefore, knitting it while little Lina threaded the beads, and Sänchen worked the tobacco bag.

When the children were gone to bed, the purse was put aside, and so was Frau Goetzenberger's usual knitting; and out came two beautiful pieces of wool knitting, which were destined, in the end, to become two pretty little jackets of sky-blue, with white borders, as Christmas presents from Frau Goetzenberger to the two little girls. Ida helped her, therefore, at night; she did all the difficult parts, and thus the work went on, both with rapidity and accuracy.

The professor returned just in time for the commencement of the winter session, or *semester*, as it is called. The number of students was now much greater than ever, and the professor, who had been studying hard at Carlsbad, in order to add new matter to his lectures, was consequently more than ordinarily busy. He had not even time to call on his good neighbors to thank them for the care they had taken of his Lina, and he thought her greatly improved during his

absence. He sent, however, once more a verbal message by his old servant, Gretchen, to thank them, and to say that as early as possible he would call.

Lina, who found her home very dull in comparison with her little friend Sänchen's, was but seldom with her father, whose time, as I said before, would be, until Christmas, so very much occupied. Little Sänchen sometimes went home with Lina, but the grave looks of the professor rather frightened her; besides, having lived all her life with ladies, she had not been used to tobacco smoke, which she greatly disliked; therefore Lina, in order that she might enjoy her society, spent most evenings still at Frau Goetzenberger's. The two ladies, Frau Goetzenberger and Fräulein Ida, knew enough of learned professors to be quite sure that no slight was intended them, although the Professor von Hoffman did not call. They were by no means exacting, and they thought that he had done all that could be required from so learned and so celebrated a man, whose time was more valuable than gold, when he had sent them a polite message of thanks, by Gretchen.

At length Christmas was at hand, when the professor's labors were remitted for a time, and when, learned as he was, he knew that it was his duty, as well as every body else's, to have a Christmas tree,

and to make a present to every one, rich or poor, whom he either loved or respected, or to whom he was under an obligation of gratitude. All these things, learned man as he was, he took into consideration. "If," thought he to himself, "I had found my Ida Schmidt at Königsberg, I should have laid out a hundred florins, at the least, in a Christmas present for her; but, alas, such good luck was not for me! The hundred florins, as far as she is concerned, still remain in my purse. I must, however, make those good ladies, Frau and Fräulein Goetzenberger, a handsome present, because they have been so good to Lina. Poor, dear, little Lina! what a blessing it would have been to her had I but found my Ida! but it is no use lamenting. The day after to-morrow is Christmas eve; there is, therefore, no time to lose. I must have a Christmas tree in my dull room for Lina; she shall find beneath it not only a present for herself, but also for her kind friends, and I will take her in myself to present them. I have too long neglected to call on them to return them my thanks. If they ask me to stop and eat a little salad and sausage that night, and to drink good wishes to them in a glass of wine, I will do so: that will be much better than stopping here by myself."

With these thoughts, out came the professor's purse:

a purse, for all the world, just like that which Ida was finishing at that very moment for him. He looked at the purse and sighed. Why did he sigh? for it was not by any means an empty purse. He thought to himself, as he looked at it, "This purse is many years old. I have kept it carefully, and never used it until I set out on that luckless journey to Königsberg, for I thought, if it should be my Ida, I would prove to her by the purse, which I had treasured so long, how much I had valued her gift!" and again the professor sighed.

But sighing would not buy either his Christmas tree or the presents for his Lina's friends. He be-thought himself, and soon decided that he would buy some splendid fur for the ladies. This was always acceptable. For Fräulein Ida he would buy ermine, and for the old lady sable. He would purchase the best that money could buy, and to the children he would be as good a benefactor as if he were a fairy godfather, if there ever were such beings. He filled both ends of his purse. I cannot tell you how much money he put into it; and, throwing round him his large fur-collared blue cloak, and putting on his overshoes, he set off into the town, where he made such astonishing purchases as put every shopkeeper into good humor for a week. He bought also an enormous

Christmas tree, standing in its green garden, with sugar sweetmeats innumerable; and all were received safely into the house by ten o'clock, which, in that old-fashioned town, was a late hour.

On the morning before Christmas day, Frau Goetzenberger sent over her old servant Barbet with her compliments, and she begged that the Herr Baron von Hoffman would do her the honor to bring in his little Lina at five o'clock to see her Christmas tree, and afterwards to eat a little salad and sausage and to drink a glass of wine with her and Fräulein Ida.

The professor hesitated to reply. "He was intending," he said, "to have a Christmas tree at home for his little Lina, and would have invited the ladies to his rooms, but that he could not think of bringing them out at night." He therefore returned his compliments by Barbet, and begged that Frau Goetzenberger would oblige him by deferring her Christmas tree for half an hour; and still further, would she permit her little grandniece Sänchen to come over and see what the good Christ-child might bring, after which he would have the pleasure of accompanying the two children to Frau Goetzenberger's, and would feel much honor in partaking of supper with her and Fräulein Ida.

Again Barbet crossed the garden to assure the

Herr Professor that nothing could be more satisfactory than this arrangement.

Very busy was the good professor all that morning in his library, the door of which was locked, so that Lina, had she been so disposed, could not even have peeped in. He had a deal to do about his Christmas tree, and often and often did he wish that he had but some skilful female fingers to aid him. How he managed it all by himself I really cannot say; however, at half past four o'clock, little Sänchen was brought over in a new pale-blue silk frock, with black satin shoes on, and little black silk mits, and with her lovely flaxen hair plaited like a crown round her head, and conducted into the professor's sitting room, which looked very gloomy with its black stove and one lamp, with a blue shade over it. Here, however, she was rapturously received by Lina, likewise dressed in a new pink silk frock, with her little black satin slippers on, and little black silk mits, and with her dark hair plaited just like Sänchen's.

The next moment a little bell was heard to ring, which the children knew to be *Christkindchen's*, and the door between the library and sitting room opened, and there was a sight for them! Such a blaze of light! such a Christmas tree! all hung over with beautiful things — dolls, and work boxes, and cakes,

and sugar birds, and dogs, and milkmaids, and Tyrolian shepherds. O, it was beautiful! And there were muffs and tippets, of ermine and sable! But those could not be either for Lina or Sänchen.

"No," the professor said, his countenance beaming with joy (Sänchen was no longer afraid of him) as he eyed the two lovely children who stood so beautifully hand in hand before him—"no, those fur tippets and muffs the Christkindchen had told him were for Frau Goetzenberger and Fräulein Ida."

Sänchen clapped her hands for joy, because aunt Ida had wished for an ermine tippet, and the great-aunt Goetzenberger loved to be warm. But where was the good Christkindchen that had brought these beautiful things?

The professor smiled, and said that Christkindchen was in such a hurry to be off to Frau Goetzenberger's, that she would not stop to say where the things came from. Lina flung her arms round her father's neck and kissed him. She knew, she said, where the things had come from, for Gretchen had told her something. She loved her papa dearly, because it was *he* who had bought those nice warm things for Fräulein Ida and Frau Goetzenberger, and he had bought things for other people beside! The good papa! he had not forgotten old Martin, who lived in

the court below, and had such a bad leg; nor Gretchen, nor Barbet, nor the poor milkwoman and all her children, nor the shoemaker who was ill.

Certainly the good professor must have had an excellent, thoughtful heart, thus to remember everybody! I assure you he had. Little Sänchen kissed him, and thought nothing about the tobacco smoke. But now it was half past five, and Barbet was come to carry Sänchen across the snowy garden; the professor was to carry Lina. They set out, accompanied by Gretchen with a lantern in one hand and a basket in the other, containing the gifts which had been left by Christkindchen under the professor's tree for Frau Goetzenberger and her household.

While the professor took off his cloak and overshoes, the children rushed in, having easily slipped out of the large shawls in which they were wrapped, to tell of the wonderful things that had happened, and of the wonderful things they brought; but there was no aunt Ida to listen to them. Frau Goetzenberger sat, all dressed in her best, on her sofa, with a green-shaded lamp before her, and with no knitting in her hands. But where was aunt Ida? She was gone, the old lady said, to receive the Christkindchen, who was every moment expected. They must sit down and wait patiently; good little children always did so.

"But, aunt," said Sänchen, "here is the Herr Professor."

"Ah, indeed!" returned the old lady, in quite another voice, for from being blind she was not aware that he had approached the table before her. "Bring him here to me, my dear; I am truly glad to see the Herr Professor."

He took her hand kindly, and seated himself beside her. There was something inexpressibly attractive to him in all that he saw around him; he felt his heart drawn, as it were, to the old blind lady, as if she had been his mother, and he spoke words of unfeigned kindness, in a voice which went equally to her heart. She apologized that Ida was not present to receive him; she had, said she, much to do on an occasion of that kind, as the Herr Professor no doubt knew. Of course he knew perfectly well; the Christkindehen must always be well received; he feared that he himself had not done her all due honor, for she was in so great hurry to depart that the little ones had not seen even the shimmering of her wings.

"But we saw what she left," said Sänchen, heaping the beautiful furs on the table before the old lady; "feel what she brought for you;" and taking up her hand, she passed it over the fur; "she brought you

a sable muff and tippet, and the same for aunt Ida, only ermine!"

"My dear," remonstrated aunt Goetzenberger, "this is too much! Christkindchen does not bring such presents as these!"

"But my papa does!" said little Lina; "and I am so glad, and I love him so for it!" said she, springing to his knee and kissing him.

"This is quite too much, Herr Professor," said the old lady, turning to him.

He made no reply, for at that very moment a little silver bell rang, and a sight presented itself which dazzled all eyes. The professor's tree, with all his skill, was nothing to this. How indeed could it have been? This was all arranged by Fräulein Ida herself, and there was nobody in all Germany who could make these things so beautiful as she.

But where was Fräulein Ida all this time? The children hardly thought of her, so wholly was their attention occupied by the wonderful tree, with all its wonderful fruits, and by the lovely Christkindchen herself, who, in soft, flowing white muslin, which fell in folds to her feet, and was confined at the waist by a silver girdle, stood in front of her tree. She had silvery, shining wings on her shoulders, and a little

silver crown on her head. Never was a more beautiful figure beheld. She looked like a pure angel just descended from heaven. The children stood in the open doorway, with their hands extended and their eyes fixed in delighted wonder. Dear old Frau Goetzenberger saw nothing, or certainly she would have observed the extraordinary effect which this vision produced on the Herr Professor.

Christkindchen spoke — her words were in poetry — beautiful, softly-flowing poetry, full of tenderness and love. The professor had silently risen, and now stood in the shadow of the long curtain which was withdrawn from the door; for he did not dare to trust himself within the light. Very powerful was the effect of that low, sweet voice upon him; he had known one like it in former years; and did not, in truth, his long-lost and beloved Ida now stand before him? O, what a divine gift had not the Christkindchen brought him! I assure you that the professor, standing there in the shade of that curtain, shed tears of joy. “God, perhaps, deems me at length deserving of her!” thought he, remembering the words of the old woman at Greifswald; and he silently thanked God.

“But where is the Herr Professor?” at length exclaimed Christkindchen, when now, having concluded

her poetical address, she proceeded to appropriate her gifts. "Let him come forward, for here I find a beautiful pair of slippers from his little daughter, every stitch being done by her tiny fingers. I have also a purse knitted with beads of steel upon a dark-blue ground, to represent the stars of heaven on Christmas eve: this is from a lady who wishes well to the excellent Herr Professor. But where is he?"

The Herr Professor stepped forward. He said not a word, but, advancing to Christkindchen, took her hand in his, and whispered softly, "My Ida!" All at once Christkindchen's other hand dropped powerless to her side, and she lay motionless in the professor's arms. He carried her to the unoccupied sofa, speaking words of the utmost tenderness; the children began to cry; poor blind Frau Goetzenberger rose up, felt her way round her table, and, advancing forward, exclaimed, "What has happened! O Ida! Ida! speak, my child; art thou ill? Do, somebody, tell me what has happened!" repeated she in impatient terror.

"Papa has kissed her! She is better now," exclaimed little Lina, still sobbing.

Ida raised herself from the sofa, and leaned her head, weeping, on the professor's shoulder. He kissed her hands and her forehead many times, and then, as

poor old Frau Goetzenberger still impatiently inquired what had happened, he turned round, and said, "I have found here her whom I have sought for years—the betrothed of my youth! Pardon me, madam, if I have forgotten myself—pardon me, Ida, if I have been too abrupt!"

"O Eberhard!" said Ida, rising, "how is this? But take off all this finery first, which is not real—these wings and this crown: let me not find any thing unreal at this moment. And you, Eberhard, how can you be the Herr von Hoffman?"

He explained it in a few words. "And you," said he—"you are called Ida Goetzenberger. How is that?"

"Nobody calls me so but you," she replied, smiling; "I am Ida Schmidt."

"But I understood," said he, "that my Ida lived with Madame Bernhard."

"My maiden name was Bernhard," said the old lady, who now understood it all, for she knew the history of Ida's early love; "my nephew it was who married Ida's sister. I am not aunt to Ida, but only great-aunt to Sänchen; but they are both my children. Ida is dear to me as a daughter; she has been a daughter to me!" and the blind eyes of the dear old lady shed tears.

The professor told the history of his many fruitless journeys in search of her who was so near to him after all. In a while they all laughed together.

Together they walked to the yet brilliant Christmas tree: they looked at the various presents; he took up the new purse, and compared it with the old one. Ida saw how her present, given so many years ago, had been treasured. The children sat one on each of the professor's knees, and he told Sänchen that he should like to be her uncle, and he told Lina that he hoped aunt Ida would be her mother. The old lady sat by and smiled, for she saw it all, although not with the outward sight; and she blessed God that he had given so much happiness to those who were so dear to her.

The professor ate his sausage and salad with Frau Goetzenberger that night, and so he did every night until early in May, when, having made his own habitation very neat and cheerful, arranged all his books by the help of a poor student, whom he paid handsomely, and furnished, in beautiful style, several new rooms, Ida became his wife; and Frau Goetzenberger, and little Sänchen, and old Barbet moved across the university garden, and took up their abode with their new relative, in the great old house with the grinning face over the gateway.

That same summer an operation was performed on the eyes of Frau Goetzenberger by a famous oculist, a friend of the professor, and she fully regained her sight; and in the autumn they all spent the holidays on little Sänchen's splendid property in the beautiful Saxon Switzerland, the professor, at the request of Ida, having secured it to his little daughter, in right of her deceased mother, retaining only for himself its income during her minority.

Such is the history of the wonderful occurrences on Frau Goetzenberger's last Christmas eve.

MARIE DE LA TOUR.

THE basement front of No. 12 Rue St. Antoine, a narrow street in Rouen, leading from the Place de la Pucelle, was opened by Madame De la Tour, in the millinery business, in 1817, and tastefully arranged, so far as scant materials permitted the exercise of decorative genius. She was the widow of a once flourishing *courtier maritime*, (ship broker,) who, in consequence of some unfortunate speculations, had recently died in insolvent circumstances. At about the same time, Clément Derville, her late husband's confidential clerk, a steady, persevering, clever person, took possession of the deceased ship broker's business premises on the quay, the precious savings of fifteen years of industrious frugality enabling him to install himself in the vacant commercial niche before the considerable connection attached to the well-known establishment was broken up and distributed amongst rival *courtiers*. Such vicissitudes, frequent in all trading communities, excite but a passing

interest; and after the customary commonplaces commiserative of the fallen fortunes of the still youthful widow, and gratulatory good wishes for the prosperity of the *ci-devant* clerk, the matter gradually faded from the minds of the sympathizers, save when the rapidly-rising fortunes of Derville, in contrast with the daily lowlier ones of Madame De la Tour, suggested some tritely sentimental reflection upon the precariousness and instability of all mundane things. For a time, it was surmised by some of the fair widow's friends, if not by herself, that the considerable services Derville had rendered her were prompted by a warmer feeling than the ostensible one of respect for the relict of his old and liberal employer; and there is no doubt that the gentle, graceful manners, the mild, starlit face of Madame De la Tour had made a deep impression upon Derville, although the hope or expectation founded thereon vanished with the passing time. Close, money-loving, business-absorbed as he might be, Clément Derville was a man of vehement impulse and extreme susceptibility of female charm—weaknesses over which he had again and again resolved to maintain vigilant control, as else fatal obstacles to his hopes of realizing a large competence, if not a handsome fortune. He succeeded in doing so; and as year after year

glided away, leaving him richer and richer, Madame De la Tour poorer and poorer, as well as less and less personally attractive, he grew to marvel that the bent form, the clouded eyes, the sorrow-sharpened features of the woman he occasionally met hastening along the streets could be those by which he had been once so powerfully agitated and impressed.

He did not, however, form any new attachment; was still a bachelor at forty-five; and had for some years almost lost sight of, and forgotten, Madame De la Tour, when a communication from Jeanne Favart, an old servant who had lived with the De la Tours in the days of their prosperity, vividly recalled old and fading memories. She announced that Madame De la Tour had been for many weeks confined to her bed by illness, and was, moreover, in great pecuniary distress.

"*Diantre!*" exclaimed Derville, a quicker and stronger pulse than usual tinging his sallow cheek as he spoke. "That is a pity. Who, then, has been minding the business for her?"

"Her daughter Marie, a gentle, pious child, who seldom goes out except to church, and," added Jeanne, with a keen look in her master's countenance, "the very image of the Madame De la Tour we knew some twenty years ago."

"Ha!" M. Derville was evidently disturbed, but not so much as to forget to ask, with some asperity, if "dinner was not ready."

"In five minutes," said Jeanné, but still holding the half-opened door in her hand. "They are very, very badly off, monsieur, those unfortunate De la Tours," she persisted. "A *huissier* this morning seized their furniture and trade stock for rent, and if the sum is not made up by sunset, they will be utterly ruined."

M. Clément Derville took several hasty turns about the room, and the audible play of his fingers amongst the Napoleons in his pockets inspired Jeanne with a hope that he was about to draw forth a sufficient number for the relief of the cruel necessities of her former mistress. She was mistaken. Perhaps the touch of his beloved gold stilled for a time the agitation that had momentarily stirred his heart.

"It is a pity," he murmured; and then briskly drawing out his watch, added sharply, "But pray let us have dinner. Do you know that it is full seven minutes past the time that it should be served?"

Jeanne disappeared, and M. Derville was very soon seated at table. But although the sad tidings he had just heard had not been able to effectually loosen his purse strings, they had at least power utterly to destroy

his appetite, albeit the *poulet* was done to a turn. Jeanne made no remark on this, as she removed the almost untasted meal, nor on the quite as unusual fact, that the wine *carafe* was already half emptied, and her master himself restless, dreamy, and preoccupied. Concluding, however, from these symptoms, that a fierce struggle between generosity and avarice was going on in M. Derville's breast, she quietly determined on bringing an auxiliary to the aid of generosity, that would, her woman's instinct taught her, at once decide the conflict.

No doubt the prosperous ship broker *was* unusually agitated. The old woman's news had touched a chord which, though dulled and slackened by the heat and dust of seventeen years of busy, anxious life, still vibrated strongly, and awakened memories that had long slept in the chambers of his brain, especially one pale Madonna face, with its soft, tear-trembling eyes, that — “*Ciel!*” he suddenly exclaimed, as the door opened and gave to view the very form his fancy had conjured up — “*Ciel!* can it be — Pshaw!” he added, as he fell back into the chair from which he had leaped up; “you must suppose me crazed, Mademoiselle — Mademoiselle De la Tour, I am quite certain.”

It was indeed Marie De la Tour, whom Jeanne

Favart had, with much difficulty, persuaded to make a personal appeal to M. Derville. She was a good deal agitated, and gladly accepted that gentleman's gestured invitation to be seated, and take a glass of wine. Her errand was briefly, yet touchingly told, but not apparently listened to by Derville, so abstracted and intense was the burning gaze with which he regarded the confused and blushing petitioner. Jeanne, however, knew whom he recognized in those flushed and interesting features, and had no doubt of the successful result of the application.

M. Clément Derville *had* heard and comprehended what was said, for he broke an embarrassing silence of some duration, by saying, in a pleased and respectful tone, "Twelve Napoleons, you say, mademoiselle. It is nothing: here are twenty. No thanks, I beg of you. I hope to have an opportunity of rendering you—of rendering Madame De la Tour, I mean—some real and lasting service."

Poor Marie was profoundly affected by this generosity, and the charming blushfulness, the sweet-toned, trembling words that expressed her modest gratitude, were, it should seem, strangely interpreted by the excited ship broker. The interview was not prolonged, and Marie De la Tour hastened with joy-lightened steps to her home.

Four days afterwards, M. Derville called at the Rue St. Antoine only to hear that Madame De la Tour had died a few hours previously. He seemed much shocked, and after a confused offer of further pecuniary assistance, respectfully declined by the weeping daughter, took a hurried leave.

There is no question that, from the moment of his first interview with her, M. Derville had conceived an ardent passion for Mademoiselle De la Tour; so ardent and bewildering as not only to blind him to the great disparity of age between himself and her,—which he might have thought the much greater disparity of fortune in his favor would balance and reconcile,—but to the very important fact, that Hector Bertrand, a young *mennisier*, (carpenter,) who had recently commenced business on his own account, and whom he so frequently met at the charming *modiste's* shop, was her accepted, affianced lover. An *éclaircissement*, accompanied by mortifying circumstances, was not, however, long delayed.

It occurred one fine evening in July. M. Derville, in passing through the *marché aux fleurs*, had selected a brilliant bouquet for presentation to Mademoiselle De la Tour; and never to him had she appeared more attractive, more fascinating, than when accepting, with hesitating, blushing reluctance, the proffered

flowers. She stepped with them into the little sitting room behind the shop; M. Derville followed; and the last remnant of discretion and common sense that had hitherto restrained him giving way at once, he burst out with a vehement declaration of the passion which was, he said, consuming him, accompanied, of course, by the offer of his hand and fortune in marriage. Marie De la Tour's first impulse was to laugh in the face of a man who, old enough to be her father, addressed her in such terms; but one glance at the pale face and burning eyes of the speaker convinced her that levity would be ill-timed—possibly dangerous. Even the few civil and serious words of discouragement and refusal with which she replied to his ardent protestations were oil cast upon flame. He threw himself at the young girl's feet, and clasped her knees in passionate entreaty, at the very moment that Hector Bertrand, with one De Beaune, entered the room. Marie De la Tour's exclamation of alarm, and effort to disengage her dress from Derville's grasp, in order to interpose between him and the new comers, were simultaneous with several heavy blows from Bertrand's cane across the shoulders of the kneeling man, who instantly leaped to his feet, and sprang upon his assailant with the yell and spring of a madman. Fortunately for Bertrand, who was

no match in personal strength for the man he had assaulted, his friend De Beaune promptly took part in the encounter; and after a desperate scuffle, during which Mademoiselle De la Tour's remonstrances and entreaties were unheard or disregarded, M. Derville was thrust, with inexcusable violence, into the street.

According to Jeanne Favart, her master reached home with his face all bloody and discolored, his clothes nearly torn from his back, and in a state of frenzied excitement. He rushed past her up stairs, shut himself into his bed room, and there remained unseen by any one for several days, partially opening the door only to receive food and other necessities from her hands. When he did at last leave his room, the impassive calmness of manner habitual to him was quite restored, and he wrote a note in answer to one that had been sent by Mademoiselle De la Tour expressive of her extreme regret for what had occurred, and enclosing a very respectful apology from Hector Bertrand. M. Derville said that he was grateful for her sympathy and kind wishes; and as to M. Bertrand, he frankly accepted his excuses, and should think no more of the matter.

This mask of philosophic indifference or resignation was not so carefully worn but that it slipped occasionally aside, and revealed glimpses of the vol-

canic passion that raged beneath. Jeanne was not for a moment deceived; and Marie De la Tour, the first time she again saw him, perceived, with woman's intuitive quickness, through all his assumed frigidity of speech and demeanor, that his sentiments towards her, so far from being subdued by the mortifying repulse they had met with, were more vehemently passionate than ever. He was a man, she felt, to be feared and shunned; and very earnestly did she warn Bertrand to avoid meeting, or, at all events, all possible chance of collision with, his exasperated, and, she was sure, merciless and vindictive rival.

Bertrand said he would do so; and he kept his promise as long as there was no temptation to break it. About six weeks after his encounter with M. Derville, he obtained a considerable contract for the carpentry work of a large house belonging to a M. Mangier—a fantastic, Gothic-looking place, as persons acquainted with Rouen will remember, next door but one to Blaise's banking house. Bertrand had but little capital, and he was terribly puzzled for means to purchase the requisite materials, of which the principal item was Baltic timber. He essayed his credit with a person of the name of Dufour, on the quay, and was refused. Two hours afterwards, he again sought the merchant, for the purpose of proposing his

friend De Beaune as security. Dufour and Derville were talking together in front of the office; and when they separated on Bertrand's approach, the young man fancied that Derville saluted him with unusual friendliness. De Beaune's security was declined by the cautious trader; and as Bertrand was leaving, Dufour said, half jestingly, no doubt, "Why don't you apply to your friend Derville? He has timber on commission that will suit you, I know; and he seemed very friendly just now." Bertrand made no reply, and walked off, thinking, probably, that he might as well ask the statue of the "Pucelle" for assistance as M. Derville. He was, naturally enough, exceedingly put out and vexed, and unhappily betook himself to a neighboring tavern for "spirituous" solacement—a very rare thing, let me add, for him to do. He remained there till about eight o'clock, and by that time was in such a state of confused elation from the unusual potations he had imbibed, that Dufour's suggestion assumed a sort of drunken likelihood; and he resolved on applying—there could not, he thought, be any wonderful harm, if no good, in that—to the ship broker. M. Derville was not at home, and the office was closed; but Jeanne Favart, understanding Bertrand to say that he had important business to transact with her master,—she supposed

by appointment,—showed him into M. Derville's private business rooms, and left him there. Bertrand seated himself, fell asleep after a while, woke up about ten o'clock considerably sobered, and quite alive to the absurd impropriety of the application he had tipsily determined on, and was about to leave the place, when M. Derville arrived. The ship broker's surprise and anger at finding Hector Bertrand in his house were extreme, and his only reply to the intruder's stammering explanation was a contemptuous order to leave the place immediately. Bertrand slunk away sheepishly enough, and, slowly as he sauntered along, had nearly reached home when M. Derville overtook him.

"One word, Monsieur Bertrand," said Derville. "This way, if you please."

Bertrand, greatly surprised, followed the ship broker to a lane close by—a dark, solitary locality, which suggested an unpleasant misgiving, very pleasantly relieved by Derville's first words.

"Monsieur Bertrand," he said, "I was hasty and ill tempered just now; but I am not a man to cherish malice, and for the sake of—of Marie—of Mademoiselle De la Tour, I am disposed to assist you, although I should not, as you will easily understand, like to have any public or known dealings with you.

Seven or eight hundred francs, I understood you to say, the timber you required would amount to."

"Certainly not more than that, monsieur," Bertrand contrived to answer, taken away as his breath nearly was by astonishment.

"Here, then, is a note of the Bank of France for one thousand francs."

"Monsieur! — Monsieur!" gasped the astounded recipient.

"You will repay me," continued Derville, "when your contract is completed; and you will please to bear strictly in mind, that the condition of any future favor of a like kind is, that you keep this one scrupulously secret." He then hurried off, leaving Bertrand in a state of utter amazement. This feeling, however, slowly subsided, especially after assuring himself, by the aid of his chamber lamp, that the note was a genuine one, and not, as he had half feared, a valueless deception. "This Monsieur Derville," drowsily murmured Bertrand, as he ensconced himself in the bedclothes, "is a *bon enfant*, after all — a generous, magnanimous prince, if ever there was one. But then, to be sure, he wishes to do Marie a service by secretly assisting her *futur* on in life. *Sa-pristie!* It is quite simple, after all, this generosity; for undoubtedly Marie is the most charming — charm — cha ———"

Hector Bertrand went to Dufour's timber yard at about noon the next day, selected what he required, and pompously tendered the thousand franc note in payment. "Whe-e-e-w!" whistled Dufour, "the deuse!" at the same time looking with keen scrutiny in his customer's face.

"I received it from Monsieur Mangier in advance," said Hector, in hasty reply to that look, blurting out, in some degree inadvertently, the assertion which he had been thinking would be the most feasible solution of his sudden riches, since he had been so peremptorily forbidden to mention M. Derville's name.

"It is very generous of Monsieur Mangier," said Dufour; "and he is not famous for that virtue either. But let us go to Blaise's bank: I have not sufficient change in the house, and I dare say we shall get silver for it there."

As often happens in France, a daughter of the banker was the cashier of the establishment; and it was with an accent of womanly commiseration that she said, after minutely examining the note, "From whom, Monsieur Bertrand, did you obtain possession of this note?"

Bertrand hesitated. A vague feeling of alarm was beating at his heart, and he confusedly bethought him, that it might be better not to repeat the falsehood he

had told M. Dufour. Before, however, he could decide what to say, Dufour answered for him: "He *says* from Monsieur Mangier, just by."

"Strange!" said Mademoiselle Blaise. "A clerk of Monsieur Derville's has been taken into custody this very morning, on suspicion of having stolen this very note."

Poor Bertrand! He felt as if seized with vertigo; and a stunned, chaotic sense of mortal peril shot through his brain, as Marie's solemn warning with respect to Derville rose up like a spectre before him.

"I have heard of that circumstance," said Dufour. And then, as Bertrand did not or could not speak, he added, "You had better, perhaps, mademoiselle, send for Monsieur Derville."

This proposition elicited a wild, desperate cry from the bewildered young man, who rushed distractedly out of the banking house, and hastened with frantic speed towards the Rue St Antoine—for the moment unpursued.

Half an hour afterwards, Dufour and a bank clerk arrived at Mademoiselle De la Tour's. They found Bertrand and Marie together, and both in a state of high nervous excitement. "Monsieur Derville," said the clerk, "is now at the bank; and Monsieur Blaise requests your presence there, so that whatever mis-

apprehension exists may be cleared up without the intervention of the agents of the public force."

"And pray, monsieur," said Marie, in a much firmer tone than, from her pale aspect, one would have expected, "what does Monsieur Derville himself say of this strange affair?"

"That the note in question, mademoiselle, must have been stolen from his desk last evening. He was absent from home from half past seven till ten, and unfortunately left the key in the lock."

"I was sure he would say so," gasped Bertrand. "He is a demon, and I am lost."

A bright, almost disdainful expression shone in Marie's fine eyes. "Go with these gentlemen, Hector," she said; "I will follow almost immediately; and remember ——" What else she said was delivered in a quick, low whisper; and the only words she permitted to be heard were, "*Pas un mot, si tu m'aime,*" (Not a word, if thou lovest me.)

Bertrand found Messieurs Derville, Blaise, and Mangier in a private room; and he remarked, with a nervous shudder, that two gendarmes were stationed in the passage. Derville, though very pale, sustained Bertrand's glance of rage and astonishment without flinching. It was plain that he had steeled himself to carry through the diabolical device his revenge

had planned, and the fluttering hope with which Marie had inspired Bertrand died within him. Derville repeated slowly and firmly what the clerk had previously stated; adding that no one save Bertrand, Jeanne Favart, and the clerk whom he first suspected, had been in the room after he left it. The note now produced was the one that had been stolen, and was safe in his desk at half past seven the previous evening. M. Mangier said, "The assertion of Bertrand, that I advanced him this note, or any other, is entirely false."

"What have you to say in reply to these grave suspicions?" said M. Blaise. "Your father was an honest man; and you, I hear, have hitherto borne an irreproachable character," he added, on finding that the accused did not speak. "Explain to us, then, how you came into possession of this note; if you do not, and satisfactorily,—though, after what we have heard, that seems scarcely possible,—we have no alternative but to give you into custody."

"I have nothing to say at present—nothing," muttered Bertrand, whose impatient, furtive looks were every instant turned towards the door.

"Nothing to say!" exclaimed the banker; "why, this is a tacit admission of guilt. We had better call in the gendarmes at once."

"I think," said Dufour, "the young man's refusal to speak is owing to the entreaties of Mademoiselle De la Tour, whom we overheard implore him, for her sake, or as he loved her, not to say a word."

"What do you say?" exclaimed Derville, with quick interrogation; "for the sake of Mademoiselle De la Tour! Bah! you could not have heard aright."

"Pardon, monsieur," said the clerk who had accompanied Dufour; "I also distinctly heard her so express herself. But here is the lady herself."

The entrance of Marie, accompanied by Jeanne Favart, greatly surprised and startled M. Derville; he glanced sharply in her face, but unable to encounter the indignant expression he met there, quickly averted his look, whilst a hot flush glowed perceptibly out of his pale features. At her request, seconded by M. Blaise, Derville repeated his previous story; but his voice had lost its firmness, his manner its cold impassibility.

"I wish Monsieur Derville would look me in the face," said Marie, when Derville had ceased speaking. "I am here as a suppliant to him for mercy."

"A suppliant for mercy!" murmured Derville, partially confronting her.

"Yes; if only for the sake of the orphan daughter of the Monsieur De la Tour who first helped you

on in life, and for whom you not long since professed regard."

Derville seemed to recover his firmness at these words. "No," he said; "not even for your sake, Marie, will I consent to the escape of such a daring criminal from justice."

"If that be your final resolve, monsieur," continued Marie, with kindling, impressive earnestness, "it becomes necessary that, at whatever sacrifice, the true criminal—whom assuredly Hector Bertrand is not—should be denounced."

Various exclamations of surprise and interest greeted these words, and the agitation of Derville was again plainly visible.

"You have been surprised, messieurs," she went on, "at Hector's refusal to afford any explanation as to how he became possessed of the purloined note. You will presently comprehend the generous motive of that silence. Monsieur Derville has said, that he left the note safe in his desk at half past seven last evening. Hector, it is recognized, did not enter the house till nearly an hour afterwards; and now, Jeanne Favart will inform you *who* it was that called on her in the interim, and remained in the room where the desk was placed for upwards of a quarter of an hour, and part of that time alone."

As the young girl spoke, Derville's dilated gaze rested with fascinated intensity upon her excited countenance, and he hardly seemed to breathe.

"It was you, mademoiselle," said Jeanne, "who called on me, and remained as you describe."

A fierce exclamation partially escaped Derville, forcibly suppressed as Marie resumed: "Yes; and now, messieurs, hear me solemnly declare, that as truly as the note was stolen, *I*, not Hector, was the thief."

"'Tis false!" shrieked Derville, surprised out of all self-possession; "a lie! It was not then the note was taken; not till—not till——"

"Not till when, Monsieur Derville?" said the excited girl, stepping close to the shrinking, guilty man, and still holding him with her flashing, triumphant eyes, as she placed her hand upon his shoulder; "not till *when* was the note taken from the desk, monsieur?"

He did not, could not reply, and presently sank, utterly subdued, nerveless, panic-stricken, into a chair, with his white face buried in his hands.

"This is indeed a painful affair," said M. Blaise, after an expectant silence of some minutes, "if it be as this young person appeared to admit; and almost equally so, Monsieur Derville, if, as I more than

suspect, the conclusion indicated by the expression that has escaped you should be the true one."

The banker's voice appeared to break the spell that enchained the faculties of Derville. He rose up, encountered the stern looks of the men by one as fierce as theirs, and said hoarsely, "I withdraw the accusation! The young woman's story is a fabrication. I—I lent, gave the fellow the note myself."

A storm of execration—" *Coquin! voleur! scélérat!*" burst forth at this confession, received by Derville with a defiant scowl, as he stalked out of the apartment.

I do not know that any law proceedings were afterwards taken against him for defamation of character. Hector kept the note, as indeed he had a good right to do, and Monsieur and Madame Bertrand are still prosperous and respected inhabitants of Rouen, from which city Derville disappeared very soon after the incidents just related.

QUEEN ESTHER.

E P

Amaranth, or Token of Remembrance (1847-1855); 1853; American Periodicals
pg. 265



QUEEN ESTHER.

BY E. P.

THE decree had gone forth. Letters had been sent by posts into all the provinces, to kill all Jews, young and old, in one day. And with the decree had gone forth the gold and the silver of the king to carry it into execution.

Must the offended favorite of the rich court of Ahasuerus seek and find revenge, not only in the destruction of the offender, but wreak it forth on thousands of innocent people — men, women, and children? So thought Mordecai; and he rent his clothes, put on sackcloth with ashes, and walked the streets of the rich city of Shusan, crying with a loud voice. He mourned as few ever mourn — bitter tears over the fate of a down-trodden nation. And in every province the Jews wept. They saw the day fast approaching when they should be destroyed, and all their riches given as a spoil to their murderers. Queen Esther was informed of the decree, and of the

affliction of her uncle. She remembered with woman's heart all the goodness Mordecai had bestowed upon her from earliest childhood. His wise counsels had guided her, and she forgot not how he had led her on, step by step, with all the care and solicitude of parental love; and she was also fully conscious that she owed her present affluent position mainly to his watchfulness in her behalf. Learning the rash command of the king, she sent rich raiment to Mordecai, with the request for him to put away his sackcloth. But he would not be comforted. The uplifted sword was not removed; and till that was done, nothing could stay the torrent of his grief.

The raiment returned, Esther sent Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, to Mordecai to know more of the matter. By him, Mordecai sent a copy of the written decree to the queen. She read it, and at once saw her duty, and resolved to perform it.

She proclaimed a fast among the Jews of Shusan, and closed her reply with the noble declaration, "I will go in unto the king, which is not according to the law, and if I perish, I perish."

It required no small degree of courage to make such decision. It was no small danger she was to encounter. It might end in her banishment, and the fate of her predecessor, *Vashti*,—the beautiful, the strongly-virtuous *Vashti*,—might be her own; or death

might seal her devotion for her beloved people. To enter into the king's presence uncalled would be an offence of great magnitude against the customs, usages, and laws of the land. Should he extend his golden sceptre to her, all would be well; but should he be governed by some ill freak of the moment, some fancy leading him to consider her unsummoned appearance an infringement on his rights, evil might be the result.

Whatever the end might be, she determined to go and petition for her people, and if she perished, perish.

Had the king known that she herself was a Jewess, that the merciless command, in its execution, would bring death into his own household, he might not have granted Haman's request. Even so will all wickedness return to its originator, and the evil, man would throw upon another, fall upon himself.

On the third day, attired in her royal apparel, Queen Esther stood in the inner court, over against the king's house. How deeply must she have rejoiced as she felt the danger of her position past, and touched the golden sceptre, extended to her in token of the king's favor!

What illuminations of hope must have shone upon her path, as she heard the voice of Ahasuerus, saying to her, "What wilt thou, Queen Esther? and

what is thy request? It shall be given thee to the half of the kingdom." The prayers and fasting of the Jews had prevailed upon the Ruler of all hearts, and the first intimation of the glorious result was now seen.

The queen desired the presence of the king and Haman at a banquet on the morrow, at which request Haman was greatly rejoiced, and prided himself on the honor, which, in his selfish heart, he thought was thus bestowed upon him. But—alas for Haman and his iniquitous designs!—at this feast the king was rightly informed of his base character: with wrath he arose from the banquet, and the instrument of death which Haman had made for Mordecai became that of himself. And the order was revoked throughout all the land, and there was great joy and rejoicing in all the assemblies of the Jews.

Noble woman! Courageous in a good cause; thou triumphedst over the emissary of evil, and madest thyself a name glorious among men.

Queen Esther, standing in all thy womanly pride, with the merciless decree clasped in thy hands, resolved to do or die in the pursuit of right, thou art a pattern and an example to the people of every age, and thy success shall encourage all, who, with thy daring in a righteous cause, trust God and press onward.

THE ANGEL AND THE FLOWERS..

[TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH.]

“EACH time that a good child dies, an Angel of God comes down to earth, takes the dead child in his arms, spreads abroad his large snow-white wings, flies forth over all those places which the child had loved, and plucks a whole handful of flowers, which he bears upwards with him to the throne of God, that they may bloom there in yet greater loveliness than they had ever bloomed on earth. The good God folds all these flowers to His bosom, but upon the flower which He loveth best, He breathes a kiss, and then a voice is given to it, and it can join in the song of universal blessedness.”

Lo, all this did an Angel of God relate, whilst he bore a little child to Heaven; and the child heard as if in a dream, and the Angel winged his flight over those spots in the child's home where the little one had been wont to play, and they passed

through gardens which were filled with glorious flowers.

"Which of all these shall we take with us, and plant in Heaven?" asked the Angel.

Now there stood in the garden a slender and beautiful rose-tree, but a wicked hand had broken the stem, so that its boughs hung around it withered, though laden with large half-unfolded buds.

"The poor Rose-tree!" said the child; "let us take it with us, that it may bloom above there in the presence of God."

And the Angel took the rose-tree, and kissed the child because of the words it had spoken; and the little one half opened his eyes. They then plucked some of the gorgeous flowers which grew in the garden, but they also gathered the despised buttercup, and the wild heart's-case.

"Now then we *have* flowers!" exclaimed the child, and the Angel bowed his head; but he winged not yet his flight towards the throne of God. It was night—all was still—they remained in the great city, they hovered over one of the narrow streets in which lay heaps of straw, ashes, and rubbish, for it was flitting day.

Fragments of plates, broken mortar, rags, and old

hats, lay scattered around, all which bore a very uninviting aspect.

The Angel pointed out in the midst of all this confused rubbish, some broken fragments of a flower-pot, and a clump of earth which had fallen out of it, and was only held together by the withered roots of a wild-flower, which had been thrown out into the street because it was considered utterly worthless.

“We will take this with us,” said the Angel; “and I will tell thee why, as we soar upwards together to the throne of God.”

So they resumed their flight, and the Angel thus related his story:—

“Down in that narrow street, in the lowest cellar, there once dwelt a poor, sick boy; from his very infancy he was almost bed-ridden. On his best days, he could take two or three turns on crutches across his little chamber, and that was all he could do. On a few days in summer, the beams of the sun used to penetrate for half an hour to the floor of the cellar; and when the poor boy sat there, and let the warm, sun shine upon him, and looked at the bright red blood flowing through his delicate fingers, as he held them before his face, then was it said of him ‘He has been out to-day.’ A neighbor’s son used always

to bring him one of the young boughs of the beech-tree, when it was first budding into life, and this was all he knew of the woods in their beauteous clothing of spring verdure. Then would he place this bough above his head, and dream that he was under the beech-trees, where the sun was shining, and the birds were singing. On one Spring day, the neighbor's son also brought him some wild flowers, and amongst these there happened to be one which had retained its root, and for this reason it was placed in a flower-pot and laid upon the window-sill quite close to the bed. And the flower was planted by a fortunate hand, and it grew and sent forth new shoots, and bore flowers every year; it was the sick boy's most precious flower-garden—his little treasure here on earth—he watered it, and cherished it, and took care that the very last sunbeam which glided through the lowly window, should shine upon its blossoms. And these flowers were interwoven even in his dreams—for *him* they bloomed, for *him* they shed around their fragrance and rejoiced the eye with their beauty; and when the Lord called him hence, he turned, even in death, towards his cherished plant. He has now been a year with God, a year has the flower stood forgotten in the window, and now it is withered, therefore has it been

thrown out with the rubbish into the street. And this is the flower, the poor withered flower which we have added to our nosegay, for this flower has imparted more joy than the rarest and brightest blossom which ever bloomed in the garden of a queen."

"But how comest *thou* to know all this?" asked the child whom the Angel was bearing with him to Heaven.

"I know it," replied the Angel, "for I was myself the little sick boy who went upon crutches. I know my flower well."

And now the child altogether unclosed his eyes, and gazed into the bright glorious countenance of the Angel, and at the same moment they found themselves in the Paradise of God, where joy and blessedness for ever dwell.

And God folded the dead child to His heart, and he received wings like the other Angel, and flew hand in hand with him. And all the flowers, also, God folded to His heart, but upon the poor withered wild flower He breathed a kiss, and a voice was given to it, and it sang together with all the Angels which encircled the throne of God; some very nigh unto His presence, others encompassing these in ever-widening circles, until they reached into Infinity itself, but all alike

were happy. And they all sang with one voice, little and great ; the good, blessed child, and the poor wild flower, which had lain withered and cast out amongst the sweepings, and under the rubbish of the flitting day, in the midst of the dark, narrow street.

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THE DAUGHTER OF THE BARDI.

A TRUE OLD TALE.

THE Via dei Bardi is one of the most ancient streets of Florence. Long, dark, and narrow, it reaches from the extremity of the Ponte Rubaconte to the right of the Ponte Vecchio. Its old houses look decayed and squalid now; but in former days they were magnificent and orderly, full of all the state of those times, being the residences of many of the Florentine nobility. How many struggles of faction, how many scenes of civil war, have these old houses witnessed! for in the period of their splendor, Florence was torn by intestine feuds; from generation to generation, Guelfs and Ghibellines, Bianchi and Neri, handed down their bitter quarrels, private and personal animosity mingling with public or party spirit,

and ending in many a dark and violent deed. These combatants are all sleeping now: the patriot, the banished citizen, the timid, the cruel—all, all are gone, and have left us only tales to read, or lessons to learn, if we can but use them. But we are not skilled to teach a lesson; we would rather tell a legend of those times, recalled to mind, especially at present, because it has been chosen as the subject of a fine picture recently finished by a Florentine artist, Benedetto Servolino.

In the Via dei Bardi stood—probably still stands—the house inhabited by the chief of the great and noble family from whom it takes its name: we write of the period of the fiercest struggles between the Guelfs and Ghibellines; and the Bardi were powerful partisans of the latter party. In that house dwelt a young girl of uncommon beauty, and yet more uncommon character. An old writer thus describes her: “To look on her was enchantment; her eyes called you to love her; her smile was like heaven; if you heard her speak, you were conquered. Her whole person was a miracle of beauty, and her deportment had a certain maidenly pride, springing from a pure heart and conscious integrity.”

From the troubled scenes she had witnessed, her mind had acquired composure and courage unusual

with her sex, and it was of that high stamp that is prone to admire with enthusiasm all generous and self-devoting deeds. Such a being, however apt to inspire love, was not likely to be easily won; accordingly, the crowd of lovers who at first surrounded Dianora gradually dropped off, for they gained no favor. All were received with the same bright and beautiful smile, and a gay, charming grace, which flattered no man's vanity; so they carried their homage to other shrines where it might be more prized, though by an inferior idol. And what felt Dianora when her votaries left her? We are not told; but not long after, you might see, if you walked along the street of the Bardi towards evening, a beautiful woman sitting near a balcony: a frame of embroidery is before her; but her eyes are oftener turned to the street than to the lilies she is working. It is Dianora. But surely it is not idle curiosity that bends her noble brow so often this way, and beams in her bright, speaking eyes, and sweet, kind smile. On whom is it turned, and why does her cheek flush so quickly? A youth of graceful and manly appearance is passing her window; his name is Hyppolito: he has long cherished the image of Dianora as Dante did that of his Beatrice. In loving her, he loved more ardently every thing that is good and noble in the world; he shunned folly and

idleness, and strove to make himself worthy of what he believed Dianora to be. At length, one of Cupid's emissaries—whether nurse or friend the chronicle does not tell—aided Hyppolito in meeting Dianora. One meeting succeeded another, till she gave him her heart, as such a true, young heart is given, with entire confidence, and a strength of feeling peculiar to herself. But what could they hope? Hyppolito's family were of the opposite party, and they knew it was vain to expect from them even a patient hearing; nor were the Bardi behind in proper feelings of hatred. What was to be done? There was but one Dianora, but one Hyppolito, in the world; so have many wise young people thought of each other, both before and since the days of the Ghibellines; but these two might be excused for thinking so, for many who saw them were of the same opinion. To part—what was the world to them if they were parted? Their station, their years, their tastes,—so removed from noisy and frivolous pleasures,—their virtuous characters seemed to point out that they were born for each other. What divided them? One only point—the adverse political feelings of their families. Shall they sacrifice themselves to these? No. Thus reasoned Hyppolito; but we think the chronicles exaggerate the virtues of Dianora's character; for how many a girl unchroni-

bled by fame has, before the still tribunal of her own sense of duty to God and her parents, sacrificed her dearest hopes rather than offend them! And this, with all her heroism, Dianora did not, but gave up all these dear early claims for her new love.

Delays were needless, for time could do nothing to smooth their path; so it was determined that Hyppolito should bring a ladder to Dianora's window, and, aided by their friends, they should find their way to a priest prepared to give them his blessing. The night appointed came—still and beautiful as heart could wish; the stars sparkling in the deep-blue sky, bright as they may now be seen in that fair clime. Hyppolito has reached the house: he has fixed the ladder of ropes; there is no moon to betray him; in a minute, his light step will have reached the balcony. But there is a noise in the street, and lights approaching; the night guard is passing; they have seen the ladder, for the street is narrow. Hyppolito is down, and tries to escape—in vain. They seize and drag him to prison. What was he doing there? What can he reply? That he meant to enter the house, to carry something from it, or commit some bad deed, cannot be denied. He will not betray Dianora; it would only be to separate them forever, and leave her with a stained name. He yields to his fate; the

proofs are irresistible, and by the severe law of Florence at that period, Hyppolito must die. All Florence is in amazement. So estimable a youth, to all outward appearance, to be in reality addicted to the basest crimes! Who could have believed it? But he confesses; there is no room for doubt. Pardon is implored by his afflicted friends; but no pardon can be granted for so flagrant a crime.

Hyppolito had one consolation—his father never doubted him: if he had, one glance of his son's clear though sad eye, and candid, open brow, would have reassured him. He saw there was a mystery, but he was sure it involved no guilt on Hyppolito's part. Hyppolito also believed that his good name would one day be cleared, and that his noble Dianora would in due time remove the stain that clouded it. He consented to die, rather than live separated from her. Yet poor Hyppolito was sorry to leave the world so young; and sadly, though calmly, he arranged his small possessions, for the benefit of those he loved, and of the poor, to whom he had always been a friend.

He slept quietly the night preceding the time fixed for his execution, and was early ready to take his place in the sad procession. Did no thought cross Hyppolito's clear mind, that he was throwing away, in weak passion, a life given to him by God for noble

ends? We know not; but there he was—calm, firm, and serious. His only request was, that the procession might pass through the street of the Bardi, which some thought was a sign of penitence, an act of humiliation. The sad train moves on. An old man sitting at a door rises, strains his eyes to catch a last glimpse of Hyppolito, and then covers them in anguish, and sinks down again. This is an old man he had saved from misery and death. Two youths, hand in hand, are gazing with sad faces, and tears run down their cheeks. They are orphans: he had clothed and fed them. Hyppolito sees them, and even in that moment remembers it is he who deprives them of a protector: but it is too late to think now; for he is approaching the scene of his fault and the place of his punishment, and other feelings swell in his heart. His brows are contracted; his eyes bent on the house of the Bardi, as if they would pierce the stones of its walls; and now they are cast down, as though he would raise them no more on earth. But he starts, for he hears a loud shriek, a rushing, and an opening of the crowd: they seem to be awed by something that approaches. It is a woman, whose violent gestures defy opposition; she looks like a maniac just escaped from her keepers; she has reached Hyppolito; his fettered arms move as if they would receive

her, but in vain. She turns to the crowd, and some among them recognize the modest and beautiful daughter of Bardi. She calls out, "He is innocent of every crime but having loved me. To save me from shame, he has borne all this disgrace. And he is going to death; but you cannot kill him now. I tell you he is guiltless; and if he dies, I die with him."

The people stand amazed. At last there is a shout: "It must be true! He is innocent!" The execution is stopped till the truth is ascertained, and Dianora's statement is fully confirmed. And who shall paint the return from death to life of poor Hypolito? and to such a life! for, blazoned as the story of her love had been, Dianora's parents, considering also her firm character, subjected even the spirit of party to the voice of affection and reason; and Hypolito's family, softened by sorrow, gladly embraced their Ghibelline daughter. Whether in after life Hypolito and Dianora were distinguished by the qualities they had shown in youth, and whether the promise of affection was realized by time and intimate acquaintance, no chronicle remains to tell. This short glimpse of both is all that is snatched from oblivion—this alone stands out in bright relief, to show us they once were; the rest is lost in the darkness of time.

The moment chosen by the artist is when Dianora rushes from her house into the midst of the crowd, and reaches Hyppolito, surrounded by priests and soldiers. It is easy to see to what a varied expression of passion and action this point of the story gives rise.

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THE DREAMERS OF DOCKUM.

A TALE OF FRIESLAND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

DURING the Christmas holidays, Saske invited her brother's children, two boys and four girls, from Aldega; the guests came, for it was fine frosty weather. On the Wednesday there was to be a race at Frentjer, for a knife with a silver handle, and the whole troop of young people were to go, with Rommert at their head; but in the forenoon the weather became overcast, and every now and then the sky was cloudy. "I don't know," said Pibe; "I have strong doubts about your going. Yesterday there was a ring round the sun, and I felt a pain last night in my back. I think there will be a heavy fall of snow." "No, no, uncle," said one of his nieces, "it is beginning to brighten up, and there are breaks and openings in the clouds." But a little before twelve, it began to pour down, and whilst they were at dinner there blew a strong east

wind, which swept right over the fields, so that it was impossible for any one to look out of his eyes. The girls, who were all eager to go to Frentjer, said, "It will be better by and by." But the weather, far from clearing up, became so much worse, that a peasant would not have turned his dog out of doors ; they all, therefore, staid at home.

The air became keen and frosty ; and, whilst the cutting wind blew sharply against the buildings, the party within were weary of playing at draughts, and had chatted till they were tired. One of the children proposed telling stories. This amusement would have been at once begun, when in came two friends of the clergyman into the room. They were to have gone to Frentjer, too, but as they heard there were some pretty girls at Pibe's, they preferred spending the evening with them. They were two students from Groningen ; the one a nephew of the clergyman, and the other his college friend, the son of a quack doctor of some celebrity. They both took a share in story-telling.

"But where there's no king, there's no honor," observed the clergyman's nephew. "I propose that he who tells the best tale shall be beau, for the rest of the evening, to the girl he likes best."

So fair a proposal was readily agreed to. Mother

Saske set a pot of coffee on the hearth, and Gabe threw on some more firing, which crackled and flared up, whilst the quack doctor's son began the following story :—

“In the year 1343, two citizens of Dockum, with Rouke Lefferts, a peasant from a neighboring common, set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. As there were not many inns on the route, each pilgrim carried a knapsack on his back, and in his hand a long knobby stick ; this, with a few odd shillings in their pockets, completed their equipment for the journey to Italy. Now it so happened, that, towards the evening, they came either to a monastery or a castle ; there they had shelter for the night, fire and water gratis, and they boiled or roasted whatever they had in their knapsacks, or what chance might throw in their way. But when there were no castles or monasteries within reach, then they slept out in the open air, like Adam and Eve ; and whilst the leaves of the trees served them for curtains, the ground was their bed. When, however, they were about half a day's journey from Rome, their scanty stock of provisions began to fail them ; their meal was so nearly exhausted, that of the small quantity which remained there was not sufficient for each to make himself a cake, and unluckily they were benighted at a place where neither castle nor

monastery was to be seen far or near. How were they to manage the next morning? for they already began to feel the pangs of hunger, and if they went on half a day longer, they would not fare much better. Hunger is a sharp sword; it quickens men's wits; it had this effect on our men of Dockum. One of them whispered in his fellow's ear, 'Can't we devise some plan for getting Rouke's meal? We townsmen may easily get the better of such a clown as he is; he is so simple, a child might cheat him.' 'Yes, yes; that's seen at once,' said the other; 'that is nothing; we will soon outwit him.'

"Immediately one of them, standing up, addressed his companions in the following manner: 'My friends, we are in a sad plight; for so small a quantity of meal is left, that it would not be sufficient to satisfy our hunger; but, if we were to put the three portions together, would fill one of our hungry stomachs; therefore I think it would not be amiss if we could manage that the whole should fall into the hands of one or other of us three. However, for my part, I would not put a mouthful into my lips except in the most honorable manner. So I propose that the matter be left to the decision of Heaven. Let us go and lie down to sleep; and let him have all the meal to whom Heaven sends the best dream.' 'Capital!'

said his fellow-citizen from Dockum. The peasant, too, agreed to the plan with as good a grace as possible, though the poor fellow began to suspect that he was not likely to have fair play at the hands of his comrades. The three portions of meal were thrown together, well kneaded, and made up into a cake, which they laid on some hot stones, and covered over with the glowing embers, to bake whilst they closed their eyes in sleep.

“The citizens thought as little of any trick on the part of the clown as they did of the day of their death; it never occurred to them that he was capable of attempting one. So they tranquilly laid their weary heads on the green bank, and soon fell into a real sleep. Hunger had, however, made their companion restless and wakeful; the opportunity was not to be lost; he gently brushed the ashes from the dough with his cap, and devoured the cake with a good appetite. As he swallowed the last morsel, he could scarcely restrain himself from laughing, at the expense of the men of Dockum, as they lay snoring at his side, while the big drops of sweat chased each other down their cheeks. ‘Now,’ said he to himself, ‘you dear, good men, Rouke is perfectly contented. You will not suffer from an overloaded stomach to-day. Sure you would have found a plain cake too

dry for you, and Rouke could read his lesson very well without your help. How fresh you'll rise after such sound sleep! Good night, my dear creatures! once more, good night!' In two seconds he laid himself down again to sleep.

"As soon as the sun was risen, one of the slumberers awoke, and roused his confederate, to whom he related the following tale:—

"My friends, hear me. I am going to tell you my dream. One evening, I thought I was standing near the Fetje-Put, at Dockum, when two angels, with wings on their backs, came flying through the air, and carried me away, like a couple of eagles, into the sky. In my flight, there passed both blue and green before my eyes, and the wind whistled in my ears, just like a storm through the rigging of a ship; indeed, our flight was so rapid, that it seemed to be blowing great guns, and every hair on my head was so violently blown about, that I felt as if it were all coming out by the roots. One of the angels gave me such a swing that he stripped the skin from my finger ends up to my elbows. After we had flown thirty-four weeks, we arrived at the gate of heaven, where the other angel drew from his pocket a golden key, and with it opened the door. What then burst before my view was so bright and dazzling, that had I

an inkstand as large as the Spanish sea, and a pen that would reach from Dockum to Rome, I should completely fail in endeavoring to give you any adequate description of it. The streets were all golden, and glittered so with precious stones, that no mortal eye could for a moment gaze on them. In this world of splendor and magnificence, I could not see a single body ; but millions of souls were flitting about, so small that eleven thousand might dance upon the point of a needle.'

"When the man had related many more of the extraordinary scenes he beheld in the regions of bliss, his friend from Dockum arose and told his dream.

"'It is very singular,' he began, 'that you have dreamed you were in heaven, and I, that I visited hell. As I was walking one evening in the Keppels, there met me two persons in the garb of blacksmiths, who seized hold of me by the hand, and dragged me to the fiery pool at Stavoren. Then we sank down with the rapidity of lightning until we reached the bottom, when I found myself standing as it were in the midst of a vast common, on which nothing grew or flourished but moorgrass and rushes. After we had groped about in it for a long time, we ascended a very steep hill, on approaching the summit of which one of the black men exclaimed, "Take care ; we are

at the brink of hell." These were the only words they uttered. Having crept to the very edge, I ventured to look over, with my neck stretched out like a stork's, on the sea of fire beneath. It roared and hissed,—it crackled and snapped,—and the foaming flames poured forth their smoke like a caldron in a violent state of ebullition. This awful sight struck terror into my bosom, and I drew back as frightened as a young weasel. My dark companions bound two wings to my arms, and flew with me until we arrived just over the burning abyss, where I remained shaking my wings, like a seamew about to dart upon its victim in the depth beneath. But, comrades, when I think of what I saw then, my skin crawls up my arms. I heard the immense bellows creak and puff, which forever blew up the infernal flames; while the suffocating heat, which continually rose to the top of this awful gulf, made me swoon away, and the sparks flew about so thickly that the very hair of my head was singed. In these abodes of torment I beheld the inhabitants killing one another, and troops of devils flying hither and thither with curses on their tongues.'

"During the narration of these two dreams, the peasant pretended he was in a sound sleep, although he had heard every word that was spoken. As soon as the men of Dockum had finished, they called out

to him to rise and tell *his* dream. He immediately woke up, and appearing much alarmed, fixed both his eyes on them like a person who has been aroused from a deep slumber, and asked, in a shrill voice, 'Who are you?'

"'What!' said they; 'do not you know us?'

"'You?' he asked again — 'you? What! are you returned?'

"'Returned!' said they; 'we have not been away.'

"'What! indeed, you have not been away? Then I must be mistaken. But it is — O, I suppose I dreamed it!'

"'What have you dreamed?' asked one of his companions; 'tell us your dream.'

"'Well,' said Rouke, 'I thought that one of you had flown to heaven, under the care of two angels, and that the other was gone to hell with two black fellows. It seems only just now that you left me. At first I gazed after you as long as I could, and when you were out of sight, I waited and waited; but as neither of you made his appearance, I thought to myself, both the men of Dockum will never come back again; and because you had no more need of any thing to eat, I have in my solitude (for the secret must come out) despatched the whole cake!'"

Here the tale finished; the nieces from Aldega

had listened with such attention that you could have heard them breathe ; at the end they all four heaved a deep sigh.

In the mean while, Saske had prepared the coffee, of which each guest now partook, while the clergyman's nephew was thinking of the story he in his turn should relate to the company.

THE FLOWER GATHERER.

[FROM THE GERMAN OF KRUMMACHER.]

God sends upon the winds of Spring
Fresh thoughts into the breasts of flowers.

MISS BREMER.

THE young and innocent Theresa had passed the most beautiful part of the spring upon a bed of sickness; and as soon as she began to regain her strength, she spoke of flowers, asking continually if her favorites were again as lovely as they had been the year before, when she had been able to seek for and admire them herself. Erick, the sick girl's little brother, took a basket, and showing it to his mamma, said in a whisper, "Mamma, I will run out and get poor Theresa the prettiest I can find in the fields." So out he ran, for the first time for many a long day, and he thought that spring had never been so beautiful before; for he looked upon it with a gentle and loving heart, and enjoyed a run

in the fresh air, after having been a prisoner by the sister's couch, whom he had never left during her illness. The happy child rambled about, up and down hill. Nightingales sang, bees hummed, and butterflies flitted around him, and the most lovely flowers were blowing at his feet. He jumped about, he danced, he sang, and wandered from hedge to hedge, and from flower to flower, with a soul as pure as the blue sky above him, and eyes that sparkled like a little brook bubbling from a rock. At last he had filled his basket quite full of the prettiest flowers; and, to crown all, he had made a wreath of field strawberry flowers, which he laid on the top of it, neatly arranged on some grass, and one might fancy them a string of pearls, they looked so pure and fresh. The happy boy looked with delight at his full basket, and putting it down by his side, rested himself in the shade of an oak, on a carpet of soft green moss. Here he sat, looking at the beautiful prospect that lay spread out before him in all the freshness of spring, and listening to the ever-changing songs of the birds. But he had really tired himself out with joy; and the merry sounds of the fields, the buzzing of the insects, and the birds' songs, all helped to send him to sleep.

And peacefully the fair child slumbered, his rosy cheek resting on the hands that still held his treasured basket.

But while he slept a sudden change came on. A storm arose in the heavens, but a few moments before so blue and beautiful. Heavy masses of clouds gathered darkly and ominously together; the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled louder and nearer. Suddenly a gust of wind roared in the boughs of an oak, and startled the boy out of his quiet sleep. He saw the whole heavens veiled by black clouds; not a sunbeam gleamed over the fields, and a heavy clap of thunder followed his waking. The poor child stood up, bewildered at the sudden change; and now the rain began to patter through the leaves of the oak, so he snatched up his basket and ran towards home as fast as his legs could carry him. The storm seemed to burst over his head. Rain, hail, and thunder, striving for the mastery, almost deafened him, and made him more bewildered every minute. Water streamed from his poor soaked curls down his shoulders, and he could scarcely see to find his way homewards. All on a sudden a more violent gust of wind than usual caught the treasured basket, and scattered all his

carefully collected flowers far away over the field. His patience could endure no longer, for his face grew distorted with rage, and he flung the empty basket from him, with a burst of anger. Crying bitterly, and thoroughly wet, he reached at last his parents' house in a pitiful plight.

But soon another change appeared; the storm passed away, and the sky grew clear again. The birds began their songs, anew, the countryman his labor. The air had become cooler and purer, and a bright calm seemed to lie lovingly in every valley and on every hill. What a delicious odor rose from the freshened fields!—and their cultivators looked with grateful joy at the departing clouds, which had poured the fertilizing rain upon them. The sight of the blue sky soon tempted the frightened boy out again, and being by this time ashamed of his ill-temper, he went out very quietly to look for his discarded basket, and to try and fill it again. He seemed to feel a new life within him. The cool breath of the air—the smell of the fields—the leafy trees—the warbling birds, all appeared doubly beautiful after the storm, and the humiliating consciousness of his foolish and unjust ill-temper softened and chastened his joy. After a long search

he spied the basket lying on the slope of a hill, for a bramble bush had caught it, and sheltered it from the violence of the wind. The child felt quite thankful to the ugly-looking bush, as he disentangled the basket.

But how great was his delight, on looking around him, to see the fields spangled with flowers, as numerous as the stars of heaven!—for the rain had nourished into blossoms thousands of daisies, opened thousands of buds, and scattered pearly drops on every leaf. Erick flitted about like a busy bee, and gathered away to his heart's content. The sun was now near his setting, and the happy child hastened home with his basket full once more. How delighted he was with his flowery treasure, and with the pearly garland of fresh strawberry-flowers! The rays of the sinking sun played over his fair face as he wandered on, and gave his pretty features a placid and contented expression. But his eyes sparkled much more joyously when he received the kisses and thanks of his gentle sister. "Is it not true, dear," said his mother, "that the pleasures we prepare for others are the best of all?"

THE GAMBLER'S LAST STAKE.

A SCENE IN MADRID.

IN an inner room of his counting house, which occupied a wing of his splendid mansion in the Calle Alcala, sat Don José Solano, one of the richest bankers in Madrid, ruminating with much self-complacency upon the profitable results of a recent speculation. He was interrupted in his meditations by the entrance of one of his clerks ushering in a stranger, who brought a letter of introduction from a banker at Mexico, with whom Don José had had occasional transactions. The letter stated that the bearer, the Conde de Valleja, was of a highly-respected family of Mexican nobility, that he was desirous of visiting Europe, and more especially the country of his ancestors, Spain; and it then went on to recommend him in the strongest terms to the Madrid banker, as one whose intimacy and friendship could not fail to be sought after by all who became acquainted with his many excellent and agreeable qualities.

The appearance of the count seemed to justify, as far as appearance can do, the high terms in which he was spoken of in this letter. He was about eight and twenty years of age, dark complexioned, with a high, clear forehead, short, crisp, curling hair, an intelligent and regular countenance, and a smile of singular beauty and fascination. His eyes were the only feature which could be pronounced otherwise than extremely pleasing; although large, black, and lustrous, they had a certain fixity and hardness of expression that produced an unpleasant impression upon the beholder, and would, perhaps, have been more disagreeable had not the mellow tones of the count's voice, and his suavity and polish of manner, served in great measure to counteract the effect of this peculiarity.

Doing due honor to the strong recommendation of his esteemed correspondent, Don José welcomed the young Conde with the utmost hospitality, insisted on taking possession of him for the whole of the day, and, without allowing him to return to his hotel, dragged him into the house, presented him to his son and daughter, and charged them to use their utmost exertions to entertain their guest, while he himself returned to his occupations till dinner time. At one o'clock the old banker reappeared in the sala, where

he found Rafael and Mariquita Solano listening with avidity to the agreeable conversation of the count, who, in his rich and characteristic Mexican Spanish, was giving them the most interesting details concerning the country he had recently left. The magnificence of Mexican scenery, the peculiarities of the Indian races, the gorgeous vegetation and strange animals of the tropics, formed the subjects of his discourse, not a little interesting to a young man of three and twenty, and a girl of eighteen, who had never as yet been fifty leagues away from Madrid. Nor had the stranger's conversation less charms for the old banker. Valleja had been at the Havana; was acquainted with scenes, if not with persons, with which were associated some of Don José's most agreeable reminiscences — scenes that he had visited in the days of his youth, when he laid the first foundation of his princely fortune. To be brief: the agreeable manners and conversation of the count so won upon father, son, and daughter, that when, at nightfall, he rose to take his leave, the banker put his house *á su disposicion*, and followed up what is usually a mere verbal compliment, by insisting upon Valleja's taking up his abode with him during his stay in Madrid. Valleja raised many difficulties on the score of the inconveniences or trouble he might occasion; but they

were all overruled, and the contest of politeness terminated in the count's accepting the hospitality thus cordially pressed upon him. The very next day he was installed in a splendid apartment in the house of Don José.

Several days, even weeks, elapsed, during which Valleja continued to be the inmate of the Casa Solano. He appeared very well pleased with his quarters, and, on the other hand, his hosts found no reason to regret the hospitality shown him. He soon became the spoiled child of the family; Don José could not make a meal without Valleja was there to chat with him about the Havana; Rafael was the inseparable companion of his walks, rides, and out-door diversions; while the blooming Mariquita never seemed so happy as when the handsome Mexican was seated beside her embroidery frame, conversing with her in his low, soft tones, or singing to the accompaniment of her guitar some of the wild melodies of his native country. Indeed, so marked were the count's attentions to the young girl, and so favorably did she receive them, that more than one officious or well-meaning friend hinted to Don José the propriety of instituting some inquiry into the circumstances and antecedents of a man, who, it seemed not improbable, might eventually aspire to become his son-in-law. But

the banker's prepossession in favor of Valleja was so strong that he gave little heed to these hints, contenting himself with writing to his correspondent at Mexico, expressing the pleasure he had had in making the count's acquaintance, and receiving him as an inmate in his house; but without asking for any information concerning him. In fact, the letter Valleja had brought was such as to render any further inquiries nearly superfluous. It mentioned the count as of a noble and respected family, and credited him to the amount of ten thousand dollars, a sum of sufficient importance to make it presumable that his means were ample.

Before Valleja had been three days at Madrid, he had obtained his *entrée* to a house at which a number of idlers and fashionables were in the habit of meeting to play *monté*, the game of all others most fascinating to the Spaniard. Thither he used to repair each afternoon, accompanied by Rafael Solano, and there he soon made himself remarked by his judgment in play, and by the cool indifference with which he lost and won very considerable sums. For some time he was exceedingly successful. Every stake he put down doubled itself; he seemed to play with charmed money; and the bankers trembled when they saw him approach the table, and after a glance at the

state of the game, place a pile of golden ounces on a card, which almost invariably won the very next moment. This lasted several days, and he began to be considered as invincible, when suddenly his good fortune deserted him, and he lost as fast, or faster, than he had previously won; so that, after a fortnight of incessant bad luck, it was estimated by certain old gamblers, who had taken an interest in watching his proceedings, that he had lost not only all his winnings, but a very considerable sum in addition. Rafael, who rarely played, and then only for small stakes, urged his friend to discontinue a game which he found so losing; but Valleja laughed at his remonstrances, and treated his losses as trifling ones, which a single day's good fortune might retrieve. Gambling is scarcely looked upon as a vice in Spain, and young Solano saw nothing unusual or blamable in the count's indulging in his afternoon *juego*, or in his losing his money if it so pleased him, and if he thought an hour or two's excitement worth the large sums which it usually cost him. Indeed, the circumstance of their visits to the gaming room appeared to him so unimportant, that it never occurred to him to mention it to his father or sister; and they, on their part, never dreamed of inquiring in what way the young men passed the few hours of the day during which they absented themselves from their society.

The monté table which Valleja was in the habit of frequenting was situated on the third floor of a house in a narrow street leading out of the Calle Alcalá, within two or three hundred yards of the Casa Solano. Amongst the persons to be met there were many of the richest and highest in Madrid: generals and ministers, counts and marquises, and even grandees of Spain were in the habit of repairing thither to while away the long winter evenings or the sultriness of the summer day; and the play was proportionate to the high rank and great opulence of most of the players. The bank was held, as is customary in Spain, by the person who offered to put in the largest sum, the keeper of the room being remunerated by a certain tax upon the cards; a tax which, in this instance, was a heavy one, in order to compensate for the luxury displayed in the decoration and arrangements of the establishment. The three rooms were fitted up in the most costly manner; the walls lined with magnificent pier glasses; the floor covered in winter with rich carpets, and in summer with the finest Indian matting; the furniture was of the newest French fashion. Splendid chandeliers hung from the ceiling; musical clocks stood upon the side tables; the gilt balconies were filled with the rarest exotics and flowering plants. Two of the rooms were

devoted to play ; in the third, ices and refreshments awaited the parched throats of the feverish gamblers.

On a scorching June afternoon, about a month after Valleja arrived at Madrid, the Mexican and Rafael left Don José's dwelling, and bent their steps in the usual direction. While ascending the well-worn stairs of the gaming house, young Solano could not forbear addressing a remonstrance to his friend on the subject of his losses. Although the count's perfect command over himself and his countenance made it very difficult for so young and inexperienced a man as Rafael to judge of what was passing in his mind, the latter, nevertheless, fancied that for three or four days past there had been a change in his demeanor, denoting uneasiness and anxiety. It was not that he was duller or more silent ; on the contrary, his conversation was, perhaps, more brilliant and varied, his laugh louder and more frequent, than usual, but there was a hollowness in the laugh, and a strained tone in the conversation, as if he were compelling himself to be gay in order to drive away painful thoughts — intoxicating himself with many words and forced merriment. Rafael attributed this to the annoyance caused by his heavy losses, and now urged him to discontinue his visits to the monté

table, at least for a time, or until his luck became better. The count met the suggestion with a smile.

"My dear Rafael," cried he, gayly, "you surely do not suppose that the loss of a few hundred miserable ounces would be sufficient to annoy me for a moment? As to abandoning play, we should be puzzled then to pass the idle hour or two following the siesta. Besides that, it amuses me. But do not make yourself uneasy; I shall do myself no harm, and, moreover, I intend this very day to win back all my losings: I feel in the vein."

"I heartily hope you may do as you intend," said Rafael, laughing, quite reassured by his friend's careless manner; and, as he uttered the words, the count pushed open the door, and they entered the *monté* room.

The game was already in full activity, and the play very high; the table strewn with the showy Spanish cards, on which, instead of the spades and diamonds familiar to most European card players, suns and vases, sabres and horses, were depicted in various and brilliant colors. An officer of the royal guard and a dry, snuffy old marquis held the bank, which had been very successful. Large piles of ounces and of four and eight dollar pieces were on the green cloth before

them, as well as a roll of paper nearly treble the value of the specie. Twenty or thirty players were congregated round the table, while a few unfortunates, whose pockets had already been emptied, were solacing themselves with their cigars, and occasionally indulging in an oath or impatient stamp of the foot, when they saw a card come up which they would certainly have backed—had they had money so to do. Two or three idlers were sitting on the low sills of the long French windows, reading newspapers and enjoying the fragrance of the flowers; protected from the reflected glare of the opposite houses, on which the sun was darting its rays, by awnings of striped linen that fell from above the windows, and hung over the outside of the small semicircular balconies.

After standing for a few minutes at the table, and staking a doubloon, which he instantly lost, Rafael Solano took up a paper, and threw himself into an arm chair, while Valleja remained watching with keen attention the various fluctuations of the cards. For some time he did not join the game, rather to the astonishment of the other players, who were accustomed to see him stake his money, as soon as he entered the room, with an unhesitating boldness and confidence. Half an hour passed in this manner, and the presence of Valleja was beginning to be forgotten,

when he suddenly drew a heavy rouleau of gold from his pocket and placed it upon a card. The game went on; Valleja lost, and with his usual *sang froid* saw his stake thrown into the bank. Another followed, and a third, and a fourth. In four *coups* he had lost three thousand dollars. Still not a sign of excitement or discomposure appeared upon the handsome countenance of the Mexican; only an officer who was standing by him observed, that a pack of the thin Spanish cards, which he had been holding in his hands, fell to the ground, torn completely in halves by one violent wrench.

The four high stakes, so boldly played and so rapidly lost, riveted the observation of the gamblers upon Valleja's proceedings. Every body crowded round the table, and even the slight buzz of conversation, that had before been heard, totally ceased. His attention attracted by this sudden stillness, Rafael rose from his chair and joined his friend. A glance at the increased wealth of the bank, and the eagerness with which all seemed to be awaiting Valleja's movements, made him conjecture what had occurred.

"You have lost," said he to the count, "and heavily, I fear. Come, that will do for to-day. Let us go."

"Pshaw!" replied the Mexican, "a mere trifle,

which you shall see me win back." And then turning to the banker, who was just commencing a deal,—

"*Copo*," said he, "the king against the ace."

For the uninitiated in the mysteries of *monté* it may be necessary to state, that by uttering these words Valleja bound himself, if an ace came up before a king, to pay an equal amount to that in the bank, as well as all the winnings of those who had backed the ace. If, on the other hand, the king won, the whole capital of the bank was his, as well as the stakes of those who bet against him.

"*Copo al rey*."

There was a general murmur of astonishment. The bank was the largest that had been seen in that room since a certain memorable night, when King Ferdinand himself, being out upon one of the nocturnal frolics in which he so much delighted, had come up in disguise with an officer of his household, and lost a sum that had greatly advantaged the bankers and sorely diminished the contents of his Catholic majesty's privy purse. There were at least thirty thousand dollars on the table in gold and paper, and besides that, scarcely had the Mexican uttered the name of the card he favored, when, on the strength of his previous ill luck, some of the players put down nearly half as much more against it. The two bankers

looked at each other; the guardsman shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows. Both movements were so slight as to be scarcely perceptible; but they were, nevertheless, excellently well observed and understood by his partner, the high-dried old marquis, sitting opposite to him, who laid the pack of cards upon the table, their face to the cloth, and, after placing a piece of money on them to prevent their being disturbed by any chance puff of wind, opened his gold box and took a prodigious pinch of snuff. Having done this with much deliberation, he let his hands fall upon his knees, and leaned back in his chair with a countenance expressive of inexhaustible patience. The players waited for nearly a minute, but then began to grow impatient of the delay. At the first question put to the marquis, as to its motive, he waived his hand towards Valleja.

“I am waiting for the Señor Conde,” said he.

“For me?” replied Valleja. “It is unnecessary.”

“There are about twenty thousand dollars in the bank,” said the marquis, leaning forward, and affecting to count the rouleaus lying before him, “and some eight thousand staked by these gentlemen. Will your señoría be pleased to place a similar sum upon the table?”

Several of the gamblers exchanged significant glances and half smiles. The rule of the game required the player who endeavored, as Valleja was doing, to annihilate the bank at one fell swoop, to produce a sum equal to that which he had a chance of carrying off. At the same time, in societies like this one, where the players were all, more or less, known to each other,—all men of rank, name, and fortune,—it was not unusual to play this sort of decisive *coup* upon parole, and, if lost, the money was invariably forthcoming the same day.

Valleja smiled bitterly.

"I thought I had been sufficiently known here," said he, "to be admitted to the same privilege as other players. Rafael," added he, turning to his friend and handing him a key, "your father's ten thousand dollars have melted, but I have a packet of notes and current securities to considerably more than the needful amount, in the brass-bound box, in my apartment. Will you have the kindness to fetch them for me? I do not wish to interrupt my observation of the game."

"With pleasure!" replied Rafael, taking the key, and eager to oblige his friend.

"And, perhaps," continued Valleja, smiling, and detaining him as he was about to hasten out of the

room, "perhaps you will not object to tell these gentlemen, that, until you return with the money, they may take Luis Valleja's word for the sum he wishes to play."

"Most assuredly I will," answered the young man, hastily, "and I am only sorry that the señor marquis should have thought it advisable to put any thing resembling a slight upon a friend of mine and my father's. Gentlemen," he continued, to the bankers, "I offer you my guaranty for the sum Count Valleja is about to play."

The old marquis bowed his head.

"That is quite sufficient, Don Rafael," said he. "I have the honor of knowing you perfectly well. His señoría, the Count Valleja, is only known to me as Count Valleja, and I am certain that, on reflection, neither he nor you will blame me for acting as I do, when so heavy a sum is at stake."

Don Rafael left the room. The formal marquis removed the piece of money from off the pack, and took up the cards with as much dry indifference as if he were no way concerned in the result of the important game that was about to be played. Valleja sauntered to the window, humming a tune between his teeth, and stepping out, pushed the awning a little aside, and leaned over the balcony.

The banker began to draw the cards, one after the other, slowly and deliberately. Nearly half the pack was dealt out, without a king or an ace appearing. The players and lookers on were breathless with anxiety; the fall of a pin would have been audible; the tune, which the count continued to hum from his station on the balcony, was heard, in the stillness that reigned, as distinctly as though it had been thundered out by a whole orchestra. Another card, and another, was drawn, and then—the decisive one appeared. The silence was immediately exchanged for a tumult of words and exclamations.

“*Que es eso?*” said Valleja, turning half round, and smelling, as he spoke, at a superb flower, which he had just plucked from one of the plants in the balcony. “What’s the matter?”

“The ace”—said the person nearest the window, who then paused and hesitated.

“Well!” said Valleja, with a sneer, “the ace—what then? It has won, I suppose.”

“It has won.”

“*Muy bien.* It was to be expected it would, since I went on the king.” And, turning round again, he resumed his tune and his gaze into the street.

“*Ha de ser rico,*” said the Spaniard to another of the players. “He must be rich. It would be difficult .

to take the loss of thirty thousand dollars more coolly than that."

Five minutes elapsed, during which the bankers were busy counting out their bank, in order to see the exact sum due to them by the unfortunate loser. When the jingle of money and rustle of paper ceased, Valleja looked round for the second time.

"How much is there, señores?" cried he.

"Thirty thousand four hundred and thirty dollars, Señor Conde," replied the old marquis, with a bow of profound respect for one who could bear such a loss with such admirable indifference.

"Very good," was the count's answer; "and here comes the man who will pay it you."

Accordingly, the next minute, a hasty step was heard upon the stairs. All eyes were turned to the door, which opened, and Rafael Solano entered.

"Where is the count?" exclaimed he, in a hurried voice, and with a discomposed countenance.

Again every head was turned towards the window; but the count had disappeared. At the same moment, from the street below, which was a quiet and unfrequented one, there arose an unusual uproar and noise of voices. The monté players rushed to the windows, and saw several persons collected round a man whom they were raising from the ground. His skull was

frightfully fractured, and the pavement around sprinkled with his blood. Rafael and some others hurried down; but, before they reached the street, Count Luis Valleja had expired. The gambler's last stake had been his life.

When young Solano reached his father's house, and, repairing to the count's apartment, opened the desk of which Valleja had given him the key, he found that it contained neither notes nor any thing else of value, but merely a few worthless papers. Astonished at this, and, in spite of his prepossession in favor of the count, feeling his suspicions a little roused by what he could hardly consider an oversight, he hurried back to the *monté* room, where his arrival served as the signal for the catastrophe that has been related.

The same evening, the amount lost was paid by Rafael Solano into the hands of the winners. The following day, the body of the count was privately interred.

After the lapse of a few weeks, there came a letter from Mexico, in reply to the one which Don José Solano had written to announce the arrival of Valleja. His Mexican correspondent wrote in all haste, anxious, if still possible, to preserve Don José from becoming the dupe of a swindler. "The Conde de Valleja," he

said, " was the last and unworthy scion of a noble and once respected family. From his early youth he had made himself remarkable as well for the vices of his character as for the skill with which he concealed them under a mask of agreeable accomplishments and fascinating manners. His father, dying shortly after he became of age, had left him the uncontrolled master of his fortune, which he speedily squandered ; and when it was gone, he lived, for some time, by the exercise of his wits, and by preying on all who were sufficiently credulous to confide in him. At length, having exhausted every resource,—when no man of honor would speak to him, and no usurer lend him a maravedi at any rate of interest,—he had, by an unworthy artifice, duped the very last person who took any interest in him, out of a few hundred dollars, and taken ship at Vera Cruz for Europe."

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the letter of credit was a forgery.

THE HEIRESS AND HER WOOERS.

BY MRS. ABDY.

"As the diamond excels every jewel we find,
So truth is the one peerless gem of the mind."

A NEW tragedy was about to be brought forth at the Haymarket Theatre. Report spoke loudly of its merits, and report touched closely on the name of its author. Either Talbot or Stratford must have written it; those regular attendants at rehearsal, who seemed equally interested in every situation, equally at home in every point, throughout the piece. Some said that it was a Beaumont and Fletcher concern, in which both parties were equally implicated; and this conjecture did not appear improbable, for the young men in question were indeed united together in bonds of more than ordinary friendship. They had been school-fellows and brother collegians; each was in the enjoyment of an easy independence; and their tastes, pursuits, and ways of living were very similar. So

congenial, indeed, were they in taste, that they had both fixed their preference on the same lady. Adelaide Linley was an accomplished and pretty heiress, who, fortunately for them, was the ward of Mr. Grayson, an eminent solicitor, with whom they had recently renewed an early acquaintance. Rivalry, however, failed of its usual effect in their case; it created no dissension between them; indeed, the manner of Adelaide was very far removed from coquetry, and although it was evident that she preferred the friends to the rest of her wooers, she showed to neither of them evidence of any feeling beyond those of friendship and good will.

The night of the tragedy arrived. Mr. and Mrs. Grayson, their ward, and two or three of her "wooters" were in attendance before the rising of the curtain; they were just as ignorant as other people touching the precise identity of the dramatist about to encounter the awful fiat of the public. Talbot and Stratford were sheltered in the deep recesses of a private box; had they been in a public one, nobody could have doubted which was the hero of the evening. Talbot's flushed cheek, eager eye, and nervous restlessness plainly indicated that the tragedy was not written on the Beaumont and Fletcher plan, but that it owed its existence entirely to himself.

The curtain rose ; the tragedy was admirably performed, and many of the speeches were beautifully written ; but it lacked the indescribable charm of stage effect, so necessary to stage success : the last act was heavy and uninteresting, great disapprobation was expressed, and finally another piece was announced for the succeeding evening.

Adelaide was much concerned ; it mattered nothing to her whether the play was written by Talbot or Stratford : she wished well to each of them, and sympathized in the disappointment of the author. Talbot, who had anticipated stepping forward to the front of the box, and gracefully bowing his acknowledgments to the applauding audience, now found himself under the necessity of making an abrupt exit, muttering invectives on their stupidity ; and Stratford repaired to his own lodgings, aware that Talbot, in the present state of his mind, was unfitted for the society even of his favorite friend. The next morning, Stratford had half finished breakfast when Talbot entered the room. Stratford was about to accost him with a lively remark, that "he hoped the severity of the audience had not spoiled his night's rest ;" but a momentary glance at his friend told him that such a remark would be cruelly sarcastic : it was quite clear that his night's rest *had* been spoiled ; it was quite

clear that what had been "sport" to the public had been death to the dramatist; it was quite clear that the "Russian Brothers," although they had ceased to exist on the stage of the Haymarket Theatre, were still hovering about, like shadowy apparitions, "to plague the inventor"!

"Read these papers," said Talbot, placing four or five newspapers in the hands of Stratford, "and do not wonder that I look and feel miserable at having thus exposed myself to the derision of the world."

Stratford hastily finished a cup of coffee, and pushed away a just broken egg; it seemed quite unfeeling to think of eating and drinking in the presence of so much wretchedness. He turned to the dramatic article of one newspaper after another, expecting to find his friend victimized, slandered, and laughed to scorn; but in reality, as my readers may perhaps be prepared to hear, the critics were very fair, reasonable critics, indeed; and it was only the sensitiveness of the author which had converted them into weapons of offence.

"I am sure," said Stratford, after the scrutiny was concluded, "the dramatic critic of the 'Times' speaks very kindly of you; does not he say that there is much beauty in many of the speeches, only that the drama is unsuited for representation?"

"Exactly so," replied Talbot, dryly; "the only defect he finds in it is, that it is perfectly unsuited for the purpose for which it was written."

"But," persisted Stratford, "he says that he is certain you would succeed better in a second attempt."

"As I shall, most assuredly, never make a second attempt," replied Talbot, "his opinion, or that of any one else on the subject, is of very little importance to me."

"Surely, however," said Stratford, "it is better to receive the commendation of writers of judgment and ability, than the applause of the one shilling gallery. Arbuscula was an actress on the Roman stage, who laughed at the hisses of the populace, while she received the applause of the knights."

Talbot only replied to this anecdote by a muttered exclamation of impatience.

And here let me give a few words of advice to my readers. Whenever you condole with those in trouble, do it in the old-fashioned, cut-and-dried way; it is true that your stock phrases and tedious truisms may cause you to be called a bore, but thousands of highly respectable condoling friends have been called bores before you, and thousands will be called so after you. But if you diverge at all from the beaten track, and attempt to introduce a literary allusion, or venture on

a classical illustration, depend upon it you will be cited ever afterwards as an extremely hard-hearted person, intent alone on displaying your own wit or wisdom, instead of properly entering into the sorrows of your friend.

"The 'Morning Chronicle,'" resumed Stratford, "speaks highly of the scene between the brothers at the end of the second act."

"Yes," replied Talbot, "and the 'Morning Chronicle' winds up its critique by advising me never to write another drama."

"Did you not say just now that you never intended to do so?" asked Stratford.

"How I wish, Stratford," exclaimed Talbot, impetuously, "that I could make you enter into my feelings. How very differently you would think and speak if *you* were the author of a condemned tragedy!"

"I do not consider," said Stratford, "that if such were the case, I should, in any respect, think or speak differently. I should feel far more pleasure in knowing that I had written a work which deserved to be successful, than mortification at the want of good taste in a mixed and misjudging audience, which had caused it to fail of success."

Stratford, having been unfortunate in his previous attempts at consolation, had taken some pains to

devise a prettily-turned speech ; but he little thought how completely successful it would prove ; the countenance of Talbot actually lighted up with pleasure.

“Are you really sincere in what you have said?” he replied. “I have a particular reason for wishing to know ; do not reply to me in a hurry ; take a few minutes for consideration.”

Somewhat surprised, Stratford began the course of mental examination prescribed by his friend ; and the result of it was, that although he had only meant to speak civilly, he found that he had been speaking truly ; for Stratford had a great admiration for literary talents, and a great wish to possess them ; he also knew that Adelaide Linley was a warm admirer of dramatic poetry ; he could not doubt that her judgment would lead her to approve of the “Russian Brothers ;” and, in regard to its condemnation, she, like every other intelligent person, must be fully aware that the plays that read best in the closet are often least adapted to the stage.

“I have considered the matter again,” said Stratford, after a pause, “and I repeat what I previously said. I should be glad to be the author of the ‘Russian Brothers,’ even although it has been condemned. But after all, Talbot, how useless is this conversation ! No good wishes on your part, or aspiring

wishes on my own, can make me the author of a drama to which I never contributed an idea or a line."

"Yet," said Talbot, "I do not see why the business might not be arranged to our mutual satisfaction. You wish to be known as the author of this play; I, perhaps foolishly and irritably, repent that I ever wrote it; no one but ourselves is aware which of us is the author: why should you not own it? I will most joyfully give up my claim to you."

Stratford was a little startled at this proposition.

"But should the deception be discovered," he said, "people will allege that, like the jay, I have been strutting in borrowed plumes."

"Not at all," replied Talbot; "your plumes are not borrowed, but are willingly bestowed upon you by the owner; besides, how should any discovery ensue, except from our own disclosures? You, of course, will not wish to disown what you consider it a credit to gain; and for myself, I give you my word, that should the 'Russian Brothers' be destined to attain high celebrity at a future day, I shall never assert my rights of paternity—they are the children of your adoption; but remember, you adopt them for life."

"Willingly," replied Stratford; "and now let us

pay a visit at Mr. Grayson's house. Doubtless the fair Adelaide will be impatient to pour balm into the wounds suffered by one of her adorers ; pity is sometimes akin to love."

"It is more frequently akin to contempt," murmured Talbot, in too low a voice to be heard ; but nevertheless the friends proceeded on their way, talking much less cheerfully, and looking much less contented, than might be supposed, when it is considered that they had recently entered into a compact so satisfactory to both of them. I wish I could say that conscience bore any share in their disquietude, and that each felt grieved and humiliated at the idea that he was violating the sacred purity of truth ; but such was not the case. Either Talbot or Stratford would have shrunk from the idea of telling a falsehood of malignity or dishonesty ; but the polite untruths of convenience or flattery were as "household words" in their vocabulary. A dim foreboding of evil, however, now seemed to overshadow them. Talbot had something of the same sensation which a man may be supposed to have, who has cast off a troublesome child in a fit of irritation. His tragedy had been a source of great disappointment and mortification to him ; but still it was his own ; it had derived existence from him ; he had spent many tedious days

and nights watching over it before he could bring it to perfection; he was not quite happy in the idea that he had forever made over all right and title in it to another. Stratford also was somewhat dispirited; he could not help thinking about a paper in the "Spectator" concerning a "Mountain of Miseries," where Jupiter allowed every one to lay down his own misery, and take up that of another person, each individual in the end being bitterly dissatisfied with the result of the experiment. Stratford had laid down his literary insignificance, and taken up the burden of unsuccessful authorship: should he live to repent it? This in the course of a little time will appear.

Adelaide Linley sat in the drawing room of her guardian, eagerly awaiting a visit from her two favorite admirers. She was not alone, neither was one of her "wooers" with her. Her companion was a quiet-looking young man, whose personal appearance had nothing in it to recommend him to notice, although a physiognomist would have been struck with the good expression of his countenance. His name was Alton, and he was the confidential clerk of her guardian. He had never presumed to address the heiress, save with distant respect; but she valued him for the excellent qualities which had made him a high favorite with Mr. Grayson, and always treated him with

kindness and consideration. On the present occasion, however, she was evidently somewhat out of humor, and accepted the sheet of paper from him, on which he had been transcribing for her some passages from a new poem, with a cold expression of thanks. Alton lingered a moment at the door of the room. "There is peculiar beauty," he said, "in the closing lines of the last passage."

"There is," replied the heiress, carelessly; "but I should scarcely have thought, Mr. Alton, that you would have taken much interest in poetry: why did you not accompany us, last night, to see the new tragedy, although so repeatedly pressed to do so?"

"I had a reason for declining to go, Miss Linley," said Alton.

"Probably you disapprove of dramatic representations," said Adelaide; "in which case, I approve your consistency and conscientiousness in refusing to frequent them."

Alton would have liked to be approved by Adelaide; but he liked to speak the truth still better.

"That was not my reason," he replied; "I do not disapprove of the drama, nor could I expect any thing that was not perfectly excellent and unexceptionable from the reputed authors of the tragedy in question. I had another reason."

"May I beg to know it?" said Adelaide, half in jest and half in earnest.

Alton's cheek became flushed, but he replied, "I am not in the habit of withholding the truth, when expressly asked for it. I never go to public amusements, because I object to the expense."

Alton could scarcely have made any speech that would more have lowered him in Adelaide's estimation. The young can make allowance for "the good old gentlemanly vice" of avarice, in those who have lived so many years in the world that gathering gold appears to them as suitable a pastime for age as that of gathering flowers for childhood; but avarice in youth, like a lock of white hair in the midst of sunny curls, seems sadly out of its place. Adelaide knew that Alton received a liberal stipend from her guardian, and that he had also inherited some property from a cousin; he had not any near relations; he was doubtless hoarding entirely for his own profit; he was a gold worshipper in a small way, accumulating the precious metal by petty economies in London, instead of going out manfully to dig it up by lumps in California. She therefore merely replied, "*You are very prudent, Mr. Alton,*" with a marked and meaning intonation of the last word, which converted it into a severe epigram, and took up a book with an air of

such unmistakable coldness, that the discomfited economist was glad to beat a retreat. Adelaide's solitude was soon more agreeably enlivened by the arrival of Talbot and Stratford. Talbot quickly dispelled all embarrassment as to the subject of the tragedy, by playfully saying, "I bring with me an ill-fated author, who, I am sure you will agree with me, deserved much better treatment than he has met with."

Hereupon, Adelaide offered words of consolation, and very sweet, kind, and winning words they were; indeed, Stratford deemed them quite sufficient to compensate for the failure of a tragedy; but, then, we must remember that Stratford was not really the author of the "Russian Brothers;" his wounds were only fictitious, and therefore it was no very difficult task to heal them. Possibly, Talbot might have felt a little uneasy at Adelaide's excess of kindness, had he been present during the whole of Stratford's visit; but Talbot had soon made his escape to his club; he had several friends there, who suspected him of having written the tragedy of the preceding night: a few hours ago he had dreaded the idea of meeting them; but now he encountered them with fearless openness, expressing his concern for the failure of Stratford's tragedy, and remarking that "the poor fellow was so terribly cut up about it, that he had advised him to

keep quiet for a few days, and let the affair blow over."

Talbot and Stratford dined together; both were in good spirits: neither of them had yet begun to feel any of the evils of the deceptive course they were pursuing. A week passed, and the sky was no longer so fair and cloudless. Adelaide's pity for Stratford was evidently far more akin to love than contempt; she was an admirer of genius, and was never wearied of talking about the tragedy, which had really made a deep impression upon her. She requested Stratford to let her have the rough copy of it; the request was not so embarrassing as might be supposed, for Stratford had been obliged to ask Talbot to give it to him, that he might be able to answer Adelaide's continual questions as to the conduct of the story and development of the characters: the handwriting of the friends was very similar, and the blotted, inter-lined manuscript revealed no secrets as to its especial inditer. "Remember," said Adelaide, as she playfully received it, "that I consider this as a gift, not as a loan; it will probably be introduced into various circles."

Talbot was present at the time, and felt a pang of inexpressible acuteness at the idea of the offspring of his own brain being paraded in "various circles"

as the production of Stratford. He could not offer any opposition to Adelaide's intentions; but he revenged himself by constant taunting allusions to the mortifications of an unsuccessful dramatist, shunned by the manager, scorned by the performers, and even a subject of sarcastic pity to the scene-shifters.

These speeches hurt and offended Stratford, especially as they were always made in the presence of Captain Nesbitt, another of the "woosers" of the heiress, who shared Talbot's newly-born jealousy of Stratford, and consequently was delighted both to prompt and keep up any line of conversation likely to humiliate him in the presence of his lady love. A short time ago, Talbot and Stratford had been generous and amicable rivals; but they had ceased to walk together in peace from the period when they entered on the crooked paths of dissimulation. When Adelaide had attentively read the manuscript tragedy, she transcribed it in a fair hand; she had already fixed on a destination for it. One of the oldest friends of Adelaide's late father was a fashionable London publisher. Adelaide had kept up frequent intercourse with him, and waited on him with her manuscript, secure of being kindly received, even if he did not grant her request. Fortunately, however, for her, he had been present at the representation of the "Russian

Brothers," and had been extremely struck with the beauty of the dialogue, and he readily agreed to print it. When the proofs were ready, Adelaide, quite sure that she should be giving great pleasure to Stratford, announced to him what she had done.

Stratford nervously started, and gave a hurried, apprehensive glance at Talbot.

"It will be certain to be a favorite with the reading public, will it not?" said Adelaide, addressing Talbot.

"I am sure it will," answered Talbot, with animation, forgetting for the moment every thing but that he was the author of the "Russian Brothers," and that the "Russian Brothers" was going to be printed. "How well the scene will read between the brothers at the end of the second act!"

"It will, indeed, returned Adelaide, with an approving glance at Talbot, whom she had lately suspected of being somewhat envious of the genius of his rival; "really we must try and inspire our friend with a little more confidence. I don't think he is at all aware of his own talents."

"I don't think he is, indeed," said Talbot, with a distant approach to a sneer.

"But my favorite passage," pursued Adelaide, "is the soliloquy of Orloff, in the third act. Will you repeat it, Mr. Stratford?"

Stratford began to repeat it as blunderingly and monotonously as he had been wont to repeat "My name is Norval," in his schoolboy days; but Talbot quickly took possession of it, and recited it with feeling and spirit.

"How strange it is," said Adelaide, "that authors rarely give effect to their own writings! But how beautiful is the sentiment of that speech — more beautiful, I think, every time one hears it. How did you feel, Mr. Stratford, when you wrote those lines?"

Stratford declared, with sincerity, that he had not the slightest recollection how he felt; and Adelaide asked Talbot to repeat another speech, and praised his memory and feeling, in return for which he praised her good taste. Poor Talbot! he was somewhat in the position of the hero of a German tale: a kind of metempsychosis seemed to have taken place in relation to himself and his friend, and he did not know whether to be delighted that his tragedy should be admired, or angry that it should be admired as the composition of Stratford. All contradictory feelings, however, merged into unmistakable resentment and discontent when the tragedy was published: it became decidedly popular; the Reviews accorded wonderfully in their commendation of it, and the first edition was

speedily sold off. Stratford's name was not prefixed to it, at his own especial request; he did not want to plunge deeper into the mazes of falsehood than he had already done. But Talbot had proclaimed with such unwearied perseverance that Stratford was the author of the condemned tragedy, that his name on the title page would have been quite an unnecessary identification. Poor Talbot! he certainly had much to try his patience at present. Stratford received abundance of invitations, in virtue of his successful authorship; he went to many parties in the character of a lion, where he was treated with much solemn reverence, and his most commonplace remark was evidently treasured as the quintessence of wit and judgment. These festivities Talbot did not wish to share. But frequently Stratford was invited to literary, *real* literary parties, where every body in the room was celebrated for doing something better than it is done by people in general; and were any half dozen guests taken at random from the assemblage, they would have sufficed to stud an ordinary party with stars. Here Stratford was introduced to brilliant novelists, exquisite poets, profound scholars, and men of searching science. Here, also, he met with literary women, as gentle and unassuming as they were gifted and celebrated, who wore their laurels with as much

simplicity as if they had been wild flowers ; and who, so far from possessing any of the old-fashioned pedantry which has aptly been defined as "intellectual tight lacing," were ready to converse on the most trite and every-day subjects—casting, however, over every subject on which they conversed, the pure and cheering sunshine of genius.

All these new acquaintance of Stratford's were extremely kind and encouraging in their manner towards him, inquiring into his tastes and employments, praising him for that which he had already done, and encouraging him to do more in future. Such society and such conversation would have realized Talbot's earliest aspirations, and he could not willingly cede those privileges to a man who had never written half a dozen lines to deserve them. Yet Talbot was not a vain nor a selfish man : had Stratford been really gifted by nature with superior abilities to his own, he would have been quite satisfied that he should have reaped the harvest of them. But that Stratford should be distinguished at once by the notice of the gifted ones of earth, and by the smiles of Adelaide Linley, and that he might himself have been occupying that doubly enviable position, had he only kept in the simple path of truth,—it was indeed a trial to the nerves and to the temper. At length,

one day, when the rivals were alone, the smouldering fire burst forth.

"I am very much surprised, Stratford," said Talbot, flattering himself that he was speaking in a remarkably cool, self-possessed tone, when in reality his cheeks were flushed with excitement, had his voice trembled with irritation—"I am very much surprised that you can continue from day to day to enjoy literary celebrity to which you must feel that you have not the shadow of a claim."

Stratford did not return an angry answer to his friend; he was on the winning side, and successful people can always afford to be good tempered. "I do not see," he replied, "how I can possibly escape all the marks of kindness and distinction that are shown to me."

"Have you any wish to escape them?" asked Talbot, sneeringly.

"Before you reproach me," said Stratford, "I think you should remember at whose suggestion the deception was first entered into."

"I did not foresee the consequences," said Talbot.

"Pardon me," said Stratford; "the consequences *were* foreseen by both of us. I remarked that I was unwilling to strut, like the jay, in borrowed plumes; and you replied, that if the 'Russian Brothers' attained

the greatest celebrity, you would never assert your rights of paternity."

"You certainly possess an excellent memory," said Talbot, sarcastically, "whatever other mental attributes you may be deficient in. I remember the promise of secrecy to which you allude, but no promise was made on *your* part; therefore, if you are inclined to descend from your usurped position, and give it up to the rightful owner, there is no cause why you should refrain from doing so."

"And can you really," asked Stratford, with surprise, "expect that I should expose myself to the censure and ridicule of society for the purpose of reinstating you in rights which you voluntarily made over to me?"

Talbot paused some time before he replied. "I feel," he said, "that I have expected too much. I rescind my proposal. I will only require you to make known the truth under a strict promise of secrecy to one individual."

"And that individual is Adelaide Linley, I conclude," said Stratford.

"It is," replied Talbot; "let Adelaide but know me as I really am, and I do not heed—at least I will endeavor not to heed—the opinion of the world; besides, Stratford, recollect that, if you marry Adelaide,

she must certainly find out the deception eventually ; she can never believe that the fount of poetry has suddenly dried up within you ; no doubt, indeed, she has already begun to wonder that you have not given vent to ' a woful sonnet made to your mistress's eyebrow.' "

Stratford returned no answer, but the conversation left a deep impression on his mind ; and he felt that it would indeed be the most honest and upright course that he could pursue, to confess the whole truth to Adelaide, and then silently to withdraw himself from the literary society of which he was so little calculated to be a member. Nor was this resolution of Stratford's so great a sacrifice as might be imagined ; he had for some time felt himself very little at ease among his brilliant new associates ; he was aware that he was only " cloth of frieze," although circumstances had for a time matched him with " cloth of gold." He could not respond to the literary quotations and allusions constantly made in his presence. He had heard some wonder expressed that he had no scraps in his portfolio to show confidentially to admiring friends ; and the editor of a leading periodical had kindly suggested to him a subject for a tale in blank verse, which, if written at all in the style of the tragedy, should, he said, receive immediate attention from him. Then, in other circles, young ladies

had requested contributions for their albums, and Adelaide had more than once expressed her wish to have new words written for some of her favorite old airs.

Stratford, the morning after his conversation with Talbot, sought the presence of Adelaide, resolved that, if his courage did not fail him, he would make a confession of his misdeeds, and an offer of his hand and heart before he left the house. He found Adelaide, as he had wished, alone; she was reading a letter when he entered, and it dropped on the ground as she rose to receive him; he lifted it up, and recognized the hand in which it was written; it was that of Captain Nesbitt, and the letter appeared to be of some length. Stratford felt disposed to be rather jealous; Captain Nesbitt was well connected, remarkably handsome, very lively, and had, like Captain Absolute, "an air of success about him which was mighty provoking."

"Do not let me interrupt your perusal of that letter," he said, rather coldly and stiffly.

"You have doubtless," said Adelaide, with a smile, "seen the handwriting; you do not prevent me from reading the letter—I have just finished it; and, although your visit may cause my answer to it to be delayed a little while longer, the delay is of no manner of importance, since I shall only write a few lines of no very agreeable purport."

"I pity the poor fellow from my heart," exclaimed Stratford, and he spoke with sincerity; he could afford to pity Captain Nesbitt when he knew that Adelaide was about to reject him.

"He does not deserve your pity," said Adelaide.

"Can the gentle and kind-hearted Adelaide express herself so harshly?" asked Stratford, feeling more and more generously inclined towards his rival, when he saw how much he was disdained.

"I must explain myself," said Adelaide; "for I should be very sorry that you (and the delighted lover actually fancied that he detected a slight emphasis on the word *you*) should believe me to be hard-hearted and unkind. Captain Nesbitt has considerably fallen in my estimation during the last few days. I have received abundant proofs that he does not always love and respect the truth."

Stratford began to feel rather nervous; he had a particular dislike to conversation which turned on the subject of love and respect for the truth.

"Captain Nesbitt," continued Adelaide, "when he first became acquainted with me, informed me that, although his present property was but limited, he expected to succeed to the estates of an old and infirm uncle residing in Wales. I was lately in company with a family who happened to live in the immediate

neighborhood of this wealthy old uncle ; he has indeed large estates, but he has two sons in excellent health, to inherit them."

Adelaide here paused, expecting to hear an exclamation of indignant surprise from Stratford ; but it was not uttered. Stratford was by no means troubled with an over-development of conscientiousness, and it appeared to him that Captain Nesbitt had committed a very venial offence in keeping two Welsh cousins in the background, who might have interfered so materially with his interests.

"Doubtless," he at length remarked, "this subterfuge on Captain Nesbitt's part was owing to the excess of his affection for you."

"I doubt it very much," said Adelaide ; "affection is always prone to overrate the good qualities of its object : now Captain Nesbitt must have greatly underrated mine, if he could deem it likely that, possessing as I do an ample sufficiency of the goods of fortune, it could make any difference to me whether the lover of my choice were wealthy or otherwise."

"Could you not in any case deem an untruth excusable?" asked Stratford.

"In none," replied Adelaide ; "but there are cases in which I deem it particularly inexcusable : the falsehoods of pride or vanity,—the assumption of being

better, or richer, or wiser than we really are,—these are, in my opinion, as contemptible as they are reprehensible.”

“Men of the world,” pursued Stratford, “are apt to think very little of an occasional deviation from truth.”

“Pardon me,” said Adelaide, “if I entirely differ from you. Should one man of the world tax another with the violation of truth in homely, downright phrase, what is the consequence? The insult is considered so unbearable, that in many cases the offender has even been called on to expiate his words with his life. Now, if a departure from truth be so mere a trifle, why should not the accusation of having departed from truth be also considered as a trifle?”

Stratford was silent; his shallow sophistry could not contend with Adelaide’s straitforward right-mindedness, and he was rejoiced when the entrance of visitors put an end to the conversation. A *tête-à-tête* with Adelaide had on that morning no charms for him; he lacked nerve for either a confession or a proposal! Perhaps, however, it would have been better for Stratford if he could have summoned courage to have outstaid the visitors, and revealed every thing to Adelaide; for discovery was impending over his head from a quarter where he could not possibly expect it, inasmuch as he was ignorant of the very existence

of the person about to give the information. Every one must have been repeatedly called on to remark, that in society there seems to be a mysterious agency perpetually at work, bearing news from one quarter to another apparently quite unconnected with it. In every class or set we meet with some person who makes us cognizant of the sayings and doings of another class or set, from which we have been hitherto removed at an immeasurable distance. Often the information thus gained is desultory and uninteresting, and it passes away from our mind almost as soon as we receive it; occasionally it strikes upon some connecting chord, and we eagerly listen, and respond to it.

When Adelaide Linley left school, she had, like most young girls, a favorite friend, with whom she kept up a regular correspondence, at the rate of three sheets of rose-colored note paper a week. Emma Penryn, however, lived in Cornwall; and as year after year passed by, and the friends never met, the correspondence decidedly slackened. Still, however, it was never wholly given up, and Adelaide had written to her friend shortly after the introduction of Talbot and Stratford to her, mentioning their names, and speaking of them as likely to prove pleasant and desirable acquaintance. The day after Adelaide's interview with Stratford, a letter arrived for her from

Emma Penryn. She apologized for her long silence, and gave an excellent reason for it; she had been receiving the addresses of a very desirable admirer, who had at length proposed, and been accepted; he was a Cornish man, and his property lay within a few miles of that of her father. After entering into numerous details regarding the carriage, the *trousseau*, and the marriage settlement, (young ladies in the nineteenth century are very apt to talk and write about the marriage settlement,) the bride elect continued:—

“I am quite sure you will hear an excellent character of my dear Trebeck, if you mention his name to Mr. Talbot; only think of their being great friends: indeed, Mr. Talbot was quite confidential with Trebeck a year ago, when staying with him in the country house of a mutual friend, and actually was so kind as to read to him the beautiful tragedy of the ‘Russian Brothers,’ to which he had just put the finishing stroke. Mr. Talbot did not let any one else know a word about it, and in fact extracted a promise of the strictest secrecy from Trebeck; the reason was, that he meant to produce the tragedy on the stage, and had a terrible nervous fear of failure—a fear which was unfortunately realized by the event; I suppose because it was too good for the audience to understand. Trebeck kept the secret most admirably,

never breathing a word of it even to me, till the brilliant success of the published play of course took off the embargo of silence, and now we tell it to every body; and Trebeck, I assure you, is not a little proud of the confidence reposed in him by his literary friend."

Adelaide read this part of the letter with incredulous surprise, imagining that Emma was under some misapprehension; but when she came to reflect on past events, she could not but see that it was very likely to be true; she had several times been much struck with the inconsistency of Stratford's conversation and his reputed literary talents, and had felt surprised that he should so invariably have resisted all persuasion, even from herself, to give any further proof of his poetical abilities. It might seem astonishing that Talbot should so freely have acquiesced in this usurpation; but Emma's letter threw light on the subject, by alluding to Talbot's nervous horror of failure, and Adelaide's quick apprehension soon enabled her to see the real state of the case, and to become sorrowfully convinced that Captain Nesbitt was not the only one of her "wookers" who had shown himself regardless of the sacred laws of truth.

Reluctantly, but steadily, did the young heiress prepare herself to act as she considered for the best

under the circumstances. She wrote to Talbot and to Stratford, requesting that they would each wait upon her at the same time on the following day. Neither of them suspected the reason of this summons; Talbot had indeed almost forgotten the existence of the silly, good-natured Trebeck: he had read the "Russian Brothers" to him, because, like most writers, he felt the wish, immediately after completing a work, to obtain a hearer for it; and because, like *some* writers, he had a great deal of vanity, and had been flattered by the deferential admiration of a man much inferior to him, and from whom he need not fear any distasteful criticism. Talbot knew Trebeck to be perfectly honorable, and if he had ever thought of him at all, he would have remembered the promise of secrecy he had exacted from him, and would have felt quite at ease. It never entered his mind that circumstances might happen which would induce Trebeck to consider himself absolved from his promise, and that, as the "Russian Brothers" had been published without a name, it was perfectly natural and probable that the Cornish squire might be ignorant that the London world of letters imputed the authorship of it to Stratford, and not to Talbot. The rivals were punctual to their appointment, anticipating nothing more important than that they should be

invited to join a party to a flower show or the opera house. Adelaide did not keep them in suspense, but said that she wished to read to them part of a letter which she had recently received. When she had finished, she told them that she had considered it right to make them acquainted with this statement, and asked if they had any thing to say in refutation of it. They looked confused, and were silent. Stratford was the first to speak. "Forgive me for my seeming assumption of talents not my own," he said; "and remember that my motive was to save a friend from the mortification of acknowledging a defeat."

"I cannot conceive that such was your only motive," replied Adelaide: "you evidently took pride and pleasure in your new character. Did you attempt to suspend the publication of the drama? Did you shrink from the distinctions that followed it? No; you courted popularity, and enjoyed it, knowing all the time that you had done nothing to merit it, and that the whole of the applause that you received was in reality the right of your friend!"

Adelaide's words sounded a knell to the hopes of Stratford, but they seemed "merry as a marriage bell" to the eager ears of Talbot. "Dearest Adelaide," he said, "how kindly, how gratifyingly do you speak of my talents! They are entirely dedicated to

you : all the laurels that they may hereafter gain for me shall be laid at your feet !”

“Do not trouble yourself to be so very grateful, Mr. Talbot,” replied Adelaide. “You will be little obliged to me when you have listened to all that I have to say to you. Your talents are undoubtedly great, but I do not consider that vividness of imagination and elegance of composition constitute a man of really fine mind, any more than a suit of regimentals and an acquaintance with military tactics constitute a brave soldier. I may continue the parallel. You entered the field of battle by your own choice, knowing that it was possible you might meet with defeat. Your first defeat came, and what was the course you pursued ? Did you resolve to try again with added vigor ? No, you determined to conceal that you had tried at all ; you deserted the noble ranks to which you belonged, to sink into the mass of commonplace beings ; and should your conduct ever become generally known, rely upon it that all literary men who sit in judgment upon you will unanimously sentence you to be cashiered for cowardice.”

Stratford breathed a little more freely during this speech : it was a great relief to his feelings to hear his friend so severely reproved.

“I will not,” pursued Adelaide, “dwell upon the

offence that you have mutually committed in departing from the straight, clear, and beautiful path of truth; you well know my opinion on the subject. I could never feel happy in a near connection, or even in an intimate friendship, with any one who did not know and revere truth as I have always done. I shall, probably, occasionally meet again with both of you; but we must meet hereafter only on the footing of common acquaintance."

The disconcerted "wooters," now no longer rivals, took a speedy departure: they exchanged a few sentences on their way, in which there was much more of recrimination than of condolence, and then coldly separated. Their friendship had long been at an end, and in the midst of all their recent mortifications, each felt consoled at the thought that he was not compelled to cede Adelaide to the other.

It was easy for Adelaide to avoid future intimacy with her two rejected lovers, without causing any remark among her circle of acquaintance.

It was now nearly the end of June. Mr. Grayson was quite a man of the old school: he did not stay in London till the middle of August, and then repair to Kissengen or Interlachen. He had a pretty country house a few miles from London, and always removed to it at midsummer. Mrs. Grayson, who

enjoyed nothing so much as her flower garden, was delighted to escape from the brown, dusty trees of a London square; and Adelaide, although she liked public amusements, liked them as "soberly" as Lady Grace in the "Provoked Husband," and always professed herself ready to rusticate as soon as the roses were in bloom. Three days after her interview with Talbot and Stratford, she removed from the hustle of London to a region of flowers, green trees, and singing birds. The former friends—now, alas! friends no longer—travelled abroad. They had each studiously contrived to depart on a different day, and to visit a different point of the continent; but they happened accidentally to meet on a mountain in Switzerland. They passed each other merely with the remarks that "the scenery was very grand," and that "the panorama of the Lake of Thun, at the Colosseum, had given one a capital idea of it."

Stratford returned to London in January: Captain Nesbitt was the first person of his acquaintance whom he encountered. Now Captain Nesbitt possessed an infallible characteristic of a narrow-minded, mean-spirited man: he never forgave a woman who had refused him, and never omitted an opportunity of speaking ill of her. After having anathematized Adelaide and her coqueties for some time, he proceeded: "Her marriage,

however, will shortly take place, and it is, I think, a fitting conclusion to her airs and graces. Perhaps, as you have only just arrived in England, you are not aware that she is engaged to her guardian's clerk."

"To Alton!" exclaimed Stratford—"to that quiet, dull young man! Impossible! She used to ridicule his unsocial habits, and also was very severe on his propensity for hoarding money."

"However that might be," replied Captain Nesbitt, "he has proved himself not too dull to devise and succeed in an admirable matrimonial speculation; and as for his system of hoarding, perhaps the fair Adelaide, although she objected to it in an indifferent person, may not disapprove of it in a husband. Heiresses are always terribly afraid of marrying men who are likely to dissipate their money."

"When is the marriage to take place?" asked Stratford, with affected carelessness.

"I believe in a few weeks," said Captain Nesbitt; "that is, if nothing should happen to prevent it. I think I could set it aside at once, if I took interest enough in Adelaide to make it worth my while to do so. I could communicate to her something respecting Alton which would decidedly lower him in her opinion."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Stratford, eagerly. "Has Alton, then, been guilty of any deviation from the truth?"

Poor Stratford! "He that is giddy thinks the world turns round;" and he had no idea that a lover could offend in any other way than by deviating from the truth.

"I do not know that Alton has told any untruth," said Captain Nesbitt; "but I have reason to think that he has kept back the truth."

"That may do quite as well," thought Stratford, "when one has to deal with so scrupulous a person as Adelaide;" and he requested Captain Nesbitt to explain himself.

"Alton's father," said Captain Nesbitt, "did not resemble the father in an old song of O'Keefe's,—

'Who, dying, bequeathed to his son a good name.'

He was, like his son, a confidential clerk—not, however, to a solicitor, but to a Liverpool merchant. He repaid the confidence of his employer by embezzling sundry sums of money, which he hazarded at the gaming table. At length the frequency of his losses occasioned him to commit a more daring act than a breach of trust: he forged the name of the merchant to a banking-house check: discovery ensued, and he only

escaped the punishment of the law by committing suicide. This event happened five years ago, and is fresh in the remembrance of many persons in Liverpool."

"But do you not think it likely that Alton may have revealed these facts to Adelaide?" asked Stratford.

"I do not think it in the least likely that he should have proved himself such a blockhead!" replied Captain Nesbitt. "Adelaide would never marry the son of a man who only escaped hanging by suicide."

"They do not hang for forgery in these days," said Stratford.

"So much the worse," said Captain Nesbitt. "It is a crime that cannot be too severely punished. I remember hearing that many years ago a man was hanged for forging the ace of spades: I wish those good old times would come back again."

Stratford was silent; not all his pique, nor all his jealousy, could induce him to think that it would be desirable for the times to come back again, when a man was hanged for forging the ace of spades.

The next day Stratford called at Mr. Grayson's, and found Adelaide alone in the drawing room. She looked a little surprised at seeing him, but received him as she would have done a common acquaintance. Stratford congratulated her on her future prospects,

and uttered some forced commendations on the excellence of Alton's character. "He affords a convincing proof," he said, with a little trepidation, "that the son of an unworthy father need not necessarily tread in his steps."

"There are so many similar instances of that fact," said Adelaide, "that I think there is nothing astonishing in them. The good or bad qualities of a father are not, like landed estates, entailed upon his son."

"Then you *do* know," said Stratford, "that Alton's father was an unworthy man?"

Adelaide looked at him with grave, earnest surprise. "You have chosen a strange subject of conversation," she said; "but I have no objection to satisfy your curiosity. I heard of the circumstance to which you allude from Alton himself."

"I conclude," said Stratford, "that Mr. Grayson insisted on his being candid with you, previous to your engagement being concluded?"

"You are quite in the wrong," returned Adelaide. "Mr. Grayson is much attached to Alton, (whom he is on the point of taking into partnership,) and was very desirous that he should propose to me. He enjoined him to keep secret the melancholy circumstances connected with his father, as they could only tend to give me uneasiness; and it was quite certain

that no one else would be so deficient in kind feeling as to mention them to me." Stratford felt rather embarrassed and uncomfortable as Adelaide uttered these words. "Alton's strict and honorable love of truth, however," pursued Adelaide, "led him to disregard this counsel. Some weeks before he proposed to me, he made known to me every particular of his father's transgression; and I assured him, in reply, that I did not consider him in the smallest degree lowered in excellence by having become good, conscientious, and truthful, without the aid of parental precept or example."

Stratford was determined to discharge a parting arrow at the provoking heiress. "You have shown yourself extremely liberal in your opinions," he said; "and you have the very comforting reflection that, from Mr. Alton's known and remarkable habits of frugality, he is never likely to fall into the same snares that proved fatal to his father, but will distinguish himself rather by saving money than by squandering it."

"As you appear," said Adelaide, "to speak in rather an ironical tone concerning Alton's economy, I think it due to him to enter into a short explanation of his motives. When Alton first paid me those

marked attentions which I knew must lead to a proposal, I sometimes rallied him on his strict frugality, and sometimes gently reproved him for it: he was not only sparing to himself, but I felt grieved to remark that, although ever willing to devote time and thought to the poor, he rarely assisted them with money. He assured me that he had a reason for his conduct, and that he was certain that I should not blame him if I knew it. He added that the necessity for economy would soon cease, and that he should then have the pleasure of indulging his natural feelings of liberality. I was not satisfied with this reply. I required him to give a direct answer to a direct question, and to tell me what were his motives for saving, and why they should exist at one time more than another."

"It was very merciless of you," said Stratford.

"Not in the least," replied Adelaide. "Alton had given me such proofs of his truthful and honorable nature, that I knew, if he held back any communication from me, he could only do so because it was creditable to him, and because he wished to avoid the appearance of boasting of his own good deeds: and so it indeed proved to be. Alton had for five years been denying himself every enjoyment suitable to his

age and tastes, for the purpose of saving the sum of money of which his father had defrauded his employer. When he first began this undertaking, it seemed likely to prove a very tedious one; but two years ago, he happily received a legacy from a relation, which more than half realized the amount that he required: still, however, he did not slacken in his laudable energy; and shortly after the conversation to which I have alluded, he was enabled to pay over the whole sum, with the accumulated interest, to the Liverpool merchant, who sent him a letter full of the kindest expressions of approbation, concluding with the assurance that he should make his noble act of atonement generally known among all his friends. Therefore by this time every one who has censured the faults and frailties of the father is engaged in lauding the honor and honesty of the son."

Stratford had heard quite enough; he took a hasty leave, sincerely repenting that he had ever thought of troubling the bride elect with a morning call.

Alton and Adelaide were married in the course of a few weeks: two years have elapsed since that time, and I am of opinion that the unusual happiness they enjoy is greatly to be attributed to the truthfulness which is the decided characteristic of both of them.

I am aware that many of my readers will say that it is of little importance whether a married couple, whose interests necessarily bind them together, should mutually love truth, or mutually agree in sanctioning the thousand and one little falsities of worldly expediency; but I think that those who hold such an opinion cannot have had many opportunities of closely observing the domestic circles of their friends and neighbors. Had they done so, they would have been aware that the beginning of matrimonial unhappiness repeatedly arises from the detection by one party of some slight violation of truth on the part of the other. Often such a violation is committed with no ill intent; nay, often, indeed, is it done with the kind motive of sparing some little trouble or anxiety to the beloved one. A trifling trouble is concealed, a small expense kept in the background, the visit of an intrusive guest unmentioned, or a letter read aloud with the omission of a short part of it, which might be supposed to be unpleasant to the listener. These concealments and misrepresentations, in themselves so seemingly slight, become of terrific account when frequently repeated; confidence is shaken, and when once *that* is the case, conjugal happiness is soon at an end. Adelaide and her husband are on the most confidential terms,

because neither of them ever thinks whether a true remark or communication is agreeable or not; they speak it *because* it is the truth; and if a moment's pain be thus given, the passing cloud breaks almost as soon as it is perceived; no tempests are suffered to gather in the distance, and the heiress constantly congratulates herself that she chose not the handsomest, the cleverest, or the most fashionable, but the most *truthful* of her "wooters." Of these wooers I have but little to say. Captain Nesbitt is on the point of marriage with a middle-aged widow of good fortune; he was successful in impressing her with the belief that he must ultimately inherit his uncle's property; but she was more cautious than ladies of fewer years and less experience might have been, and made so many inquiries about the state of health of the old gentleman, that his nephew was obliged to improvise an apoplectic fit for him! This intelligence caused the widow to fix the day, but she is providing a very limited *trousseau*, since she anticipates the "melancholy pleasure" of giving large orders in the course of a few weeks at one of the "mansions of grief" in Regent Street.

Talbot and Stratford seldom meet: indeed, if one becomes introduced into a family, the other almost

invariably ceases to visit there. However, there are two points in which they show great sympathy and congeniality of mind. They particularly dislike to hear of the failure of a new piece at the theatre; and there is no work for which they feel such unmitigated detestation as one which still engrosses much of the public notice—the tragedy of the “Russian Brothers.”